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A CERTAIN common sense is creeping into the Anglo-Irish situation. In this world everything comes down to negotiation in the long run, however high-handed and high-minded statesmen may be. The visit of Mr. Thomas and Lord Hailsham to Dublin was a step in advance: Mr. De Valera's arrival in London means, it is to be hoped, the beginning of a realistic conversation. Mr. De Valera has strong inducements to a more accommodating attitude. The Senate has refused to pass his Oath Bill, which means either a wait of eighteen months before it can be presented again or an early election in which Mr. De Valera might not do too well. His tariffs are producing some very unpopular results, and the prospect of losing possible economic benefits at Ottawa or, worse, of losing the British market by quarrelling with England are making some even of his supporters dubious of the "what-I-say-goes" attitude. On the other hand, the notion that the British Government may be trying to help Mr. Cosgrave against Mr. De Valera by threatening Ireland is just the sort of mistake which might consolidate opinion behind Mr. De Valera. It is good to see both sides leaving their pedestals and coming down to earth

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The experts have done their worst in the Technical Commissions at Geneva, and it is plain that if theirs is to be the last word a reduction of the world's armaments is as remote as the moon. Only a miracle, which means courage and common sense on the part of the Governments, can now prevent the Disarmament Conference from ending in a fiasco. Both British and American statesmen have expressed some admirable sentiments—diluted with others of a much less admirable kind. The Italians have gone far, and the Russians very much farther, in proposals for reductions and limitations, and the Germans, disarmed themselves, are naturally eager for the rest of us to disarm, as we promised in the Treaty of Versailles that we would. The chief obstacle has been France. M. Tardieu's grandiose plan, on which the French have dug themselves in, means in effect no disarmament. Is anything better to be expected from the new French Government? If it had included M. Blum and represented the French Socialists' policy, we should have had higher hopes. But a Radical Cabinet, balancing itself between Centre and Left, leaves us fearful.

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M. Herriot, in the Chamber on Tuesday, talked of "the reduction of military expenditure as a stage on the path of progressive, simultaneous, and controlled disarmament," and intimated that his Government was in favour of such a reduction. But, of course, King Charles's head came in; all this, M. Herriot said, must be "without prejudice to the national security." That is not particularly encouraging. What does offer a little more hope is the fact that France is beginning to feel the pinch. Not merely her frontiers, but her

solvency, must be secured, and M. Herriot may be impelled to save his countrymen's pockets rather than pander to their fears. And he, and the politicians everywhere, unless they are utterly bemused, must realise the need of getting some substantial results from Geneva, both for economy's sake and as a help towards restoring confidence to a despairing world. Within the next couple of weeks M. Herriot will have to come down from the general to the particular, alike on disarmament and on reparations. By putting M. Tardieu's plan in the waste-paper basket and making definite and genuine offers of reduction, he could work the miracle at Geneva. And if he would fix his eyes on the economic facts of 1932 and not on words in the treaty of 1919, he could make a firm basis for a European settlement at Lausanne.

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Major Elliot tells us that, according to the estimates of the Reparations Commission and the Bank for International Settlements, the total sum paid by Germany in reparations since the Armistice is just over one thousand million pounds at par. But of this sum well over half, nearly £600,000,000, is accounted for by arrears of State property and deliveries in kind, and less than £300,000,000 has been paid in cash abroad or under the Reparations Recovery Act and similar measures, *plus* another £50,000,000 paid in German currency. When it is remembered that the German obligation was fixed in 1921 at nearly £7,000,000,000 and that even the annuities under the Young Plan were to amount to over £5,500,000,000, the impossibility of the payments ever being made emerges plainly enough. It is true that the figures of the Reparations Commission cannot be accepted without reserve; for the German Government claim that they have paid a great deal more than the Allies admit in the form of cessions of property. But what really matters is the cash figure. With every effort to cut down her imports and expand exports over a period of years, and with all the temporary help given by extensive foreign borrowing, Germany has so far succeeded in paying in cash or its equivalent much less than one-tenth of the total demanded of her. At the much lower prices now ruling, fresh payments have become far more onerous.

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The news from and about the Far East is at the moment less exciting, but not less sinister, than it was. Guerilla warfare continues in Manchuria, while the Japanese strengthen their hold on the country. It is reported from Harbin that the Customs are now to be effectively controlled by the appointment of a Japanese Inspector-General. The old Chinese service has functioned well, and foreign traders are not looking forward with any enthusiasm to the new regime. The responsibility for the change is put on the Chinese, who will not agree to any *modus vivendi* with the Manchukuo Government. Such intransigence may be naughty or foolish in the Chinese. But how convenient for Japan! Another matter over which apprehension is felt is the forthcoming Round Table Conference. There is reason to believe that not only Japan, but the foreign community at Shanghai, hopes to get the assistance of the British Government in pressing demands on the Chinese —in particular the demand that the International Settlement should have its boundaries extended so as to include roads outside and a part of Chapei. If China were to offer these things as gifts, it might be expedient to accept them. But obviously she will do nothing of the sort. And it would be a monstrous thing if the Powers who have left the Chinese to the tender mercies of Japan should now seek to extort something for themselves out of the battered victims.

* * *

Chile's latest revolution (it is the fifth she has had in eight years) is a cause of alarm abroad, especially in the United States. The trouble is at bottom economic. Nitrates and copper, the staple exports of the country, have slumped catastrophically, and public and private finances are in a desperate state. The *coup d'état* has established (if that is not too strong a word) a Socialist dictatorship. Exactly what form their Socialism will take, if it ever gets beyond paper, remains to be seen. But it appears that their first aim is to rescue the country from the grip of the capitalist, which is tight and extensive. Millions of British money are invested in Chile, and many more millions of North American money. Not only nitrates, copper and iron-ore, but Chilean steamships and airways, the telephone system, tramways and electric light and power, are largely controlled by United States financiers. We can sympathise with the objection of Señor Davila and his friends to this kind of internationalism. But we do not suppose they will find the task of getting rid of it an easy one. Any attempt at playing the Bolshevik is likely to be met by a refusal on the part of the United States to recognise the regime, and Washington's displeasure means a good deal more in Santiago than it does in Tokio. Reports received in New York about Señor Davila's intentions are said to be reassuring—reassuring, that is, to New York.

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The appearance in Washington of thousands of "veterans" demanding the full payment of their deferred war bonus must at length compel America to realise that poverty and unemployment are national and inescapable problems. The fact that a large proportion of these ex-service men never left the American continent during the war, and that they are demanding what, from the financial point of view, is immediately almost impossible, makes no difference. They represent the army of workers for whom American capitalism fails to find work and fails adequately to provide food. So far some 8,000 have arrived in Washington, and Congress has scuttled out of the way to avoid confronting the demonstration. But many thousands more are upon the road or upon commandeered trains, and, in spite of some brushes with the police, the States which have enough unemployed of their own on their hands are hastening them on their way. What can the United States Government do? Pay? If not, how can it disperse this hungry army unsatisfied without bloodshed? No event has occurred which so spectacularly shows the breakdown of capitalism and the bankruptcy of statesmanship in America.

The value of international trade at the present time is only half, or perhaps less than half, what it was in the first quarter of 1929. This authoritative statement comes from the Report of the League of Nations Economic Committee to the League Council. Of course, a considerable part of this catastrophic decrease is due to the fall in prices; the actual reduction in the volume of trade has been a great deal less than fifty per cent. But even the volume of goods crossing national frontiers has been heavily reduced, and is still being reduced fast, as tariffs rise higher and more and more obstructions are put by banks and Governments in the way of the supply of foreign exchange. Moreover, the fall in values is, from the standpoint of the debtor countries, even more disastrous than the reduction in volume. It increases immensely the burden of their accumulated debts. The Economic Committee points out that the drastic tariffs and restrictions now in force have only a small, and exceedingly costly, effect even in redressing the balance of payments, and that existing commercial treaties are proving quite ineffective in face of the slump. It adds that the power of any one country to save itself, or to help on a return of prosperity, by purely national measures is almost nothing; and it accordingly issues a strong call for concerted action, especially for monetary readjustment and the removal of restrictions on exchange.

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An active controversy has been in progress in the newspapers of late about the relations between public and private economy. Dr. Phelps, the former Provost of Oriel College, began it, with a suggestion that individuals ought to follow the example of the National Government in spending as little as possible. The answer was at once made that this would only increase the depression, the essence of which is shortage of demand for goods and services. But why, it was then asked, if it is good for individuals to spend, should it be desirable for Governments to economise? Because, it was replied, Governments must neither spend beyond their incomes, nor add in these difficult times to the burden of taxation. Individuals should spend, if they have the money, but they should not be encouraged to run into debt. Sir Arthur Salter intervened at this point, to urge both that individuals ought to spend up to their means and that the same principle should apply to institutions, and Professor Pigou, in the name of the economists, hastened to endorse this view as one on which all economists, whatever their other differences, would be likely to agree. So far, so good: Dr. Phelps had considerably the worst of it. But a further point can reasonably be added. Whatever may be the limitations on state expenditure out of taxes in times like these—there seems to be a very strong case, in view of the reluctance of private investors to come forward, for enlarged productive public expenditure out of loans.

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In Monday's *Times*, Lord Eustace Percy gave some useful figures showing the growth of public educational expenditure since the war. He set out to analyse the causes of the growth and to show how it has been distributed between higher and elementary education, how far it is due to the rise in salaries, to the increase of prices, and to other causes. Naturally, the percentage increase works out far larger for secondary than for elementary education. The number of secondary school pupils has risen by 120 per cent. since 1913; and it is not surprising to find that expenditure on higher education, in view of higher prices and improved standards, has gone up by 250 per cent. to over £16,000,000 a year. But this sum, despite the increase, is still small in relation both to the need and to the cost of elementary education, which now costs nearly £60,500,000, as against £25,600,000 before the war. Teachers' salaries, even after the recent cuts, account for the greater part of this increase. On the other hand, running expenses are only up by about £6,500,000, and debt charges by £1,300,000, while medical services and schools for defectives, in which we are still sadly behindhand, account for over £3,000,000 of the increase. Lord Eustace Percy further points out that during the past ten years, whereas local spending on education has risen by over £9,000,000, Treasury grants have risen only by £660,000. Two conclusions can be drawn. The first is that it is nonsense to talk about large economies on education, unless these are to take the form of a further attack on teachers' salaries—which we take to be out of the question. The second is that, even if economies could be made, the local authorities would have a strong case for the savings to go to the rates, and not to the Treasury.

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The death of Lord Brentford leaves a gap on the political stage that will not easily be filled. He was not in the front rank of statesmen, nor was he even a very clever politician. He did some, and said many more, foolish things, in his Die-hard fashion. But he was a man of strong principles, and even those who had the strongest dislike of his politics respected his sincerity and his courage. In private he was a kindly man who was held in general affection; publicly he was always a bit of a joke. His nickname of Jix and Low's cartoons crystallised the popular feeling about him. He is recalled as the author of the "Flapper Vote," which his True-Blue friends deplored, as the engineer of the "Arcos raid," which they applauded, and as the sturdy defender of the Protestant prayer-book—a role in which his deep and narrow religious convictions had full play. He had the consistency and the inconsistencies of the typical Englishman, and only Englishmen could judge fairly his qualities and the defects of them.

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The *New Clarion* is the latest addition to the ranks of the weeklies. The original *Clarion*, started forty years ago, was also a weekly, and in its heyday under Robert Blatchford had a remarkable influence in the Labour Movement as a pioneer of Socialism. In later years it counted for less, and recently it has been a sixpenny monthly, making a gallant struggle to keep going. The function of the new venture is still to preach Socialism to a Labour movement which has grown older and more knowing, but is very far as yet from having attained perfect wisdom. There is clearly a need for such a paper, cheap in price, but not in style and substance. The *New Clarion* costs twopence, it is edited by Mr. F. L. Stevens, and it has an excellent list of contributors, both political and literary. We wish it the large circulation that it deserves.

REPUDIATION

THE upshot of thirteen years' peace after the war to end Prussianism is a Junker Government in Germany accompanied by rumours of a Hohenzollern restoration, and a manifesto that reads as if it had been written by the Kaiser on an off-day. There is nothing to be surprised at in having "a government of the Right" in Germany. The wonder is that the post-war pacificism and Liberalism of Germany should have so long survived. The strain has been terrific: the loss of territory, the currency collapse, the occupation of the Ruhr, the burden of reparations, the mountainous taxation, the consciousness of being the one unarmed nation among neighbours who manifestly never intended to honour their pledge also to disarm—on the top of all this an economic depression such as we in this country have so far never experienced or imagined. The German people have remained astonishingly patient, and if Dr. Brüning had been allowed by France to achieve one definite alleviation of Germany's burdens, even during the last few months, he might still be in office. To-day, though the Social Democrats are still capable of putting up a stout resistance, no one doubts that the forces of the Right represent the mood of the majority of Germans. On the eve of Lausanne, with the Disarmament Conference still in session, Germany has reached breaking point.

The only surprising thing is that the new Government is not a Nazi, but an old-guard Prussian Government. We had expected the youthful nationalism of Hitler; we are confronted with the stiff-lipped, heel-clicking nonsense of the old military and landed aristocracy which since the war has continued a bare existence on bankrupt Prussian estates. Just as the old aristocracy of Italy struggled for a time against the rise of Fascism, but was ultimately absorbed by it, so we may assume that, whatever form the coalition takes—whether officially under Herr von Papen or General von Schleicher (apparently the real author of the *coup d'état*) or under the leadership of Hitler—the big battalions of the National Socialists must be the ruling force in Germany in the near future. In domestic politics this must mean great changes in Germany. But what does it mean externally, to Europe and the world?

We doubt whether for the moment it makes much difference. Circumstances and popular sentiment would in any case determine what the German Government must say at Lausanne. Brüning might have said "repudiation" with a different accent from Papen's, but no German Government could to-day in effect say anything else. The immediate question is what France and Great Britain will say in reply. M. Herriot talks as all French Premiers talk, of the sanctity of treaty obligations. Germany, he will admit, cannot pay to-day, but France will not consider repudiation in principle. M. Herriot will suggest further moratoria. But has not Europe had enough moratoria? Is it not good business to write off a bad debt, especially when it was forced upon the debtor? Great Britain at least should stand for the policy of the clean slate. Everyone is sick of the slavery of indebtedness; the world was never more ready for what the Greeks called a "seisachtheia"—a shaking off of debts.

But how can we rid ourselves of them with the French sticking to their claims upon Germany on the one side, and the United States insisting on their pound of flesh on the other? There seems only one way out. We must begin by putting Europe in a position to place a business proposition before the United States. To-day, America has an overwhelming argument when Europe talks of debt cancellation. How, say the Americans, can you have the cheek to ask for a remittance of your debt when you are spending hundreds of millions of pounds annually on armaments? Why should we make it easier for you to equip yourselves with guns and tanks and battleships? Europe is asking the American taxpayer to pay for the next war as well as the last.

There is no reply to this argument, except for the statesmen of Europe to sweep aside the sorry farce they have staged at Geneva, to take the matter out of the hands of the experts, who, in accordance with their instructions, have been cracking some splendid jokes about whether a twelve-inch gun is offensive or defensive. (The popular answer, we understand, is that it depends at which end of the gun you happen to be.) It is not yet too late for Mr. MacDonald and M. Herriot to announce that they are after all intending to abide by their pledges, to announce a twenty-five or thirty per cent. cut in armament expenditure, and the immediate abolition of battleships, tanks, and submarines. Then the outlook for Lausanne and for the world would be very different.

If that were done, the problem of debts would be immensely simplified, because it would then be reasonable for Europe to make a joint proposal to America. Great Britain should renounce any claim to further reparations from Germany, and suggest to France that she too might cancel Germany's debt provided she could hope to free herself from her debt to the United States. A joint European proposition, which included a genuine disarmament cut and a cancellation of reparations contingent on an American cancellation of war debt, would not be easy for the United States to ignore. Nor do we believe that, if such a proposition were put before the United States as a matter of business, she would desire to disregard it. It would amount to a joint statement by America's European creditors that they were approaching bankruptcy. In no country in the world is bankruptcy so freely used as in the United States, and in no country is its advantage, both to creditor and debtor, so well understood. Internally, America has long known that the old system of putting the debtor in gaol is folly. The alternative of declaring him bankrupt and restarting him in business is obviously a more paying proposition. If their European debtors can agree on the terms of a straightforward bankruptcy, the United States may yet see that the debtor's gaol is even sillier when applied to international payments. Perhaps she may also see that the best way of ensuring payments of any kind from Europe is to trade with Europe, to permit some inflow of European goods into America. She cannot expect her debtors to pay if she makes it next to impossible for them to acquire the title to dollars with which to pay. You cannot run international or national business on a one-way traffic system.

All this, some critics will say, is just repudiation. Well, sooner or later, if the United States remains an obdurate creditor, Europe will be driven to blunt repudiation, just as Germany has been driven to it by the folly of France. Repudiation no longer sounds so awful as it sounded only six months ago. It is the common story all over the world. Another six months of dying trade, increasing unemployment, and irrelevant wrangling about debts will make repudiation sound as blessed a word as Mesopotamia.

THE LOGIC OF TARIFFS

IF there is a case at all for a British tariff, that case is certainly that a protective duty can be used to promote industrial reorganisation. We therefore welcome the decision of the Import Duties Advisory Commission to set up a special body to consider and report upon the reorganisation of the British steel trade. But why has this new body been constituted of representatives of the trade itself, without any representation of expert or impartial opinion outside it? It will doubtless be answered that the best people to set an industry to rights are those who are actually engaged in it, and that the Commission is bound to have the whip hand, because it possesses the power of giving or refusing the degree of protection which the steel-makers desire. The answer is not wholly convincing. The Coal Mines Reorganisation Commission was constituted of persons outside the coal trade, because no one even pretended to believe that a committee of colliery owners could be relied upon to take the reconstruction of the mining industry seriously in hand. Is a body of steel-masters more likely to tackle the steel problem with the required thoroughness and readiness to override obstructive vested interests? It may be held that it is, largely because the steel trade is already in the hands of a far smaller number of firms than the coal industry, and dominated, as far as the production of pig iron and crude steel is concerned, by a quite small group of big firms or combines, and also partly because, man for man, the leaders of the steel trade are a great deal more acute and far-seeing than the general body of colliery owners. But even when full allowance has been made for these differences, it remains doubtful in the extreme whether a body of steel-makers can be induced to propose changes nearly drastic enough—especially in the writing down of existing capital claims, to give the industry a healthy new start. Much will, of course, depend on the degree of pressure which Sir George May and his colleagues are prepared to exert. Given the Government's backing, they have in the last resort the power to make the industry do their will. But will they exert this pressure? And, in view of the present temper of the House of Commons, will the Government back them if they do? Though a few "young Tories," such as Capt. Macmillan, are prepared to back up the new move enthusiastically as the logical accompaniment of a tariff, the great majority of their colleagues seem to be still under the delusion that a sufficient extension of protective duties is by itself a panacea for the ills from which our industries are suffering. If the steel-makers refuse to undertake any thorough reorganisation, who is to make them? Will the May Committee in that event withdraw the protection which it has granted? What would the present House of Commons have to say if any attempt were made to act on these lines?

The best that can be said for a Commission of representatives of the industry itself is that the leaders of the steel industry have not denied that drastic reorganisation is needed. They have only protested their inability to undertake it until they are given the benefit of a protective tariff. In the steel trade, far more than in coal-mining, effective reorganisation is bound to involve not only the scrapping of obsolete plants—which has occurred to a substantial extent already—but also the provision of new capital on a considerable scale. The oft-repeated contention of the steel-masters was that it was quite useless to attempt to raise this fresh capital in the existing condition of the industry, unless the producers could be given a much larger share in the home market. Every previous attempt to get the industry to reorganise itself has been met with the demand for protection. The ground has now been cut away from under the feet of the obstructionists. They have got their tariff, though it is for the present only on a temporary and provisional basis. It is now up to them—and they cannot deny that it is up to them—to implement their reiterated promises that a tariff would make the way plain for drastic measures of reorganisation.

The steel trade is pivotal in the working of modern industrialism. It is the key industry of the constructional group; its prosperity greatly affects the demand for coal; it provides the chief raw material of the whole range of metal-using industries. More steel means more demand for coal, and cheap steel means greater activity in the metal-using industries both in the home and in the export markets. But unfortunately these two arguments cut opposite ways. If we attempt to make the steel trade prosperous by making steel dear, this is bound to react seriously both on the volume of demand for steel and on our export of a wide range of finished metal goods, from machine tools to motor cars, and from ships to railway and electrical material.

The steel employers have always contended that a guaranteed home market for their products will enable them to produce much more cheaply. They do not say that they can produce certain kinds of steel as cheap as their German or Belgian competitors, even now that Great Britain is off the gold standard. If they could, they would clearly have no case for a tariff. They maintain that they can get down to near the German and Belgian prices, and that the difference will be considerably less than the amount of the tariff which they demand. Of course, the smaller they can make this difference the more nearly prohibitive any given tariff will be, and the real test of any scheme of reorganisation will be found in its effect in putting British steel on the home market at a substantially lower price than most types of foreign steel can come in at over the tariff wall. In order to secure this, it will be necessary to ensure not only that reorganisation takes the right shape, but also that the main benefit of it is passed on to the consumer of steel in lower prices. For this reason the problem of reorganisation cannot be purely technical. It is essential to make sure that the existing capital claims of both shareholders and bondholders in the trade are drastically scaled down. Otherwise the economies due to a protected home market will probably be swallowed up in the attempt to make good past losses, to the serious detriment of the steel-using industries and of the consuming public.

The technical problem also presents considerable difficulties. If we are largely to rebuild our iron and steel plants on more up-to-date lines, so as to reduce the costs of production and transport, it is essential to know in advance for how large an industry our plans are being laid. If we build plants with a capacity much in excess of prospective demand we shall find ourselves burdened, as the German steel trade is to-day, with new capital charges which will more than offset any possible reduction in direct producing costs. It is characteristic of the latest mass-production methods to be economical when plants can be worked up to their full capacity, but very uneconomical indeed when they have to be under-employed. The British steel industry cannot possibly prosper if it has to confine itself to working for the home market, *plus* such orders as it can secure from protected or otherwise sheltered markets within the Empire. It must sell abroad, and it must enable the steel-using industries to sell their products abroad, on a very large scale if it is to justify the fresh capital expenditure which reorganisation on any significant scale is bound to involve.

Now the protection of the British market against foreign steel and foreign machinery is bound to intensify the efforts of our foreign competitors to sell their goods in the remaining markets of the world, since the steel industry occupies the same pivotal position in their national economies as it does in ours. British steel-producers and engineers are therefore certain, as a consequence of the British tariff, to encounter more severe competition and price-cutting than before in the export market. This will drive them to keep down prices for steel exports or for steel sold for the manufacture of exports. This in turn may drive them, as it has driven the German producers, to endeavour to recoup themselves for the low prices charged for exports by putting up their prices to the home consumer. The effect of this would be to increase the cost of industrial equipment over the entire range of British industries, and thus to make the investment of capital in them less attractive than ever to the potential investor. It would also put up the cost of public works of all sorts, and give the Government and the local authorities a further argument in favour of retrenchment.

The clear conclusion is that if the steel industry is to have a tariff it should be subjected to some form of price-control in the interests of the consumers as well as to the condition of reorganisation. There is no sign that either the Government or the May Committee has any control of this sort in mind. The first object is, of course, to make the industry as efficient as possible, but it is indispensable to add the proviso that the efficiency must be directed to serving the public interest through low home prices, and not merely to subsidising exports, or revalorising the capital which has been lost.

Indeed, the policy of export dumping, if it is resorted to by way of retaliation against the similar methods already in use by our competitors, can in the long run serve only to exaggerate the troubles of the steel industry throughout the world. It threatens to create a condition in which the steel-producing countries have all raised their tariffs to prohibitive levels, and are all selling dear at home in order to sell cheap abroad, with the result of discouraging investment and deepening depression in their own industries, and in which the only countries where steel can be bought cheaply are those where it is not produced at all. The steel industry, as the Economic Committee of the League of Nations has just pointed out more discreetly in an important memorandum, is by no means alone in its headlong rush down this particular steep place into the sea. Indeed, the position is common to most of the industries which are keenly competitive in the world market. The moral is that, while we may have to accept a British tariff on steel for the moment, provided that it is accompanied by proper measures of reorganisation and adequate control of prices, no such measures will advance us an inch towards solving the fundamental problems which the steel industry in all countries is up against. We may reasonably have to impose, for the moment, even more tariffs, but we must accept them only in the hope of getting less, and make up our minds to use them as means not only to internal reorganisation, but also to the conclusion of international agreements for the rationalisation of the world's steel-producing industries as a whole.

A LONDON DIARY

THE case of the Rector of Stiffkey is still *sub judice*, and there are, therefore, some comments which I must reserve until the Chancellor of the Diocese of Norwich shall have given his judgment. (The difficulty and importance of his task is shown by the fact that he is going to take a month in which to consider his verdict.) There are, however, one or two points which may be made legitimately and usefully while the facts are fresh in our mind. The entertainment which the Church and the Law have been providing for us for so many weeks at Westminster and at the Royal Courts of Justice is now over. The most remarkable fact about the trial is that for all these weeks the Church of England, at enormous expense, has been supplying the newspapers with column after column of the kind of mild pornography which, with the exception of war, is the best selling feature for a daily or evening paper. I do not know whether it is innocence or logic which makes me quite unable to understand why the law forbids newspapers to publish evidence when it is given in the Divorce Courts, but allows them to publish exactly the same kind of evidence at immense length when the Church provides it for them in the hearing of a charge under the Clergy Discipline Act, 1892. A cynical friend remarked to me that the Church had done more to endear itself to the British public by the Stiffkey case than by any of its acts and activities in the last century, and that if it staged a few more similar entertainments he would cease to be in favour of disestablishment. Less cynical people, however, will observe with amazement the strange condition of a Church which complacently stages such an entertainment as a proper method of determining whether an elderly gentleman is or is not a fit person to be rector of a country parish.

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CRITIC.

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IT was only comparatively late in life that I began to be ambitious to be a good conversationalist. Till the age of twelve, and a little beyond it, I never found myself at a loss for words when talking to anybody to whom I wished to talk. In the practical affairs of life I could ask my elders for money when I needed it, making my meaning clear in prose as lucid and as free from superfluous adjectives as Swift's. Among my contemporaries I could discuss rare stamps, or football-players, or the dramatic incidents of school-life with no sense of constraint. It is true that if I was sent against my will to a dance in order that my sister should have company I was tongue-tied from the moment I was ushered into the blaze and brilliance of the party. If I was then introduced to a girl of my own age I remained tongue-tied, and, after a few timid efforts to wake me from my stupefaction, she also became tongue-tied. Even so, it never occurred to me to think what a pleasant thing it would be to be a good conversationalist. What I wanted was not to be able to say something to the girl, but to escape from her as speedily as possible. As soon as her next partner approached I made it my business to vanish from the room before a hostess had thrust my company on yet another girl who would obviously be far happier with somebody else, and I bolted upstairs to a room where there were always a number of older youths dropping in to smoke cigarettes and talk to each other in that manly way which I admired. They did not want to talk to me, and I was perfectly happy sitting and listening, knowing that I was in a room that no female foot was allowed to enter. Conversationless, I remained there, till someone announced that supper was ready, upon which I hurried downstairs with the rest to consume ices and jellies in silence and to feel that life was good.

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If at that time I had seen the advertisement of a book

Now the protection of the British market against foreign steel and foreign machinery is bound to intensify the efforts of our foreign competitors to sell their goods in the remaining markets of the world, since the steel industry occupies the same pivotal position in their national economies as it does in ours. British steel-producers and engineers are therefore certain, as a consequence of the British tariff, to encounter more severe competition and price-cutting than before in the export market. This will drive them to keep down prices for steel exports or for steel sold for the manufacture of exports. This in turn may drive them, as it has driven the German producers, to endeavour to recoup themselves for the low prices charged for exports by putting up their prices to the home consumer. The effect of this would be to increase the cost of industrial equipment over the entire range of British industries, and thus to make the investment of capital in them less attractive than ever to the potential investor. It would also put up the cost of public works of all sorts, and give the Government and the local authorities a further argument in favour of retrenchment.

The clear conclusion is that if the steel industry is to have a tariff it should be subjected to some form of price-control in the interests of the consumers as well as to the condition of reorganisation. There is no sign that either the Government or the May Committee has any control of this sort in mind. The first object is, of course, to make the industry as efficient as possible, but it is indispensable to add the proviso that the efficiency must be directed to serving the public interest through low home prices, and not merely to subsidising exports, or revalorising the capital which has been lost.

Indeed, the policy of export dumping, if it is resorted to by way of retaliation against the similar methods already in use by our competitors, can in the long run serve only to exaggerate the troubles of the steel industry throughout the world. It threatens to create a condition in which the steel-producing countries have all raised their tariffs to prohibitive levels, and are all selling dear at home in order to sell cheap abroad, with the result of discouraging investment and deepening depression in their own industries, and in which the only countries where steel can be bought cheaply are those where it is not produced at all. The steel industry, as the Economic Committee of the League of Nations has just pointed out more discreetly in an important memorandum, is by no means alone in its headlong rush down this particular steep place into the sea. Indeed, the position is common to most of the industries which are keenly competitive in the world market. The moral is that, while we may have to accept a British tariff on steel for the moment, provided that it is accompanied by proper measures of reorganisation and adequate control of prices, no such measures will advance us an inch towards solving the fundamental problems which the steel industry in all countries is up against. We may reasonably have to impose, for the moment, even more tariffs, but we must accept them only in the hope of getting less, and make up our minds to use them as means not only to internal reorganisation, but also to the conclusion of international agreements for the rationalisation of the world's steel-producing industries as a whole.

A LONDON DIARY

THE case of the Rector of Stiffkey is still *sub judice*, and there are, therefore, some comments which I must reserve until the Chancellor of the Diocese of Norwich shall have given his judgment. (The difficulty and importance of his task is shown by the fact that he is going to take a month in which to consider his verdict.) There are, however, one or two points which may be made legitimately and usefully while the facts are fresh in our mind. The entertainment which the Church and the Law have been providing for us for so many weeks at Westminster and at the Royal Courts of Justice is now over. The most remarkable fact about the trial is that for all these weeks the Church of England, at enormous expense, has been supplying the newspapers with column after column of the kind of mild pornography which, with the exception of war, is the best selling feature for a daily or evening paper. I do not know whether it is innocence or logic which makes me quite unable to understand why the law forbids newspapers to publish evidence when it is given in the Divorce Courts, but allows them to publish exactly the same kind of evidence at immense length when the Church provides it for them in the hearing of a charge under the Clergy Discipline Act, 1892. A cynical friend remarked to me that the Church had done more to endear itself to the British public by the Stiffkey case than by any of its acts and activities in the last century, and that if it staged a few more similar entertainments he would cease to be in favour of disestablishment. Less cynical people, however, will observe with amazement the strange condition of a Church which complacently stages such an entertainment as a proper method of determining whether an elderly gentleman is or is not a fit person to be rector of a country parish.

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If at that time I had seen the advertisement of a book

with some such title as *Conversation Taught in Twelve Lessons*, I should have saved up money and bought it. But most of the advertisements I read were about cures for blushing and cures for ugly and misshapen noses, and, though I often longed to send for these, I think I could have endured my blushing and my misshapen nose if I had been given the art of conversation to console me. With what eagerness I would at that time have dipped into such a book as *How to Improve Your Conversation: An Aid to Social and Business Success*, which has just appeared from the pen of Mr. Grenville Kleiser, author of *How to Develop Self-Confidence in Speech and Manner, Humorous Hits and How to Hold an Audience, How to Sell Through Speech*, and *Fifteen Thousand Useful Phrases*. Fifteen thousand! Nay, halve that number, and then divide by ten and once more by ten, and I should have been well content with the residue.

At that time I am afraid I did not realise the part the voice plays—clear enunciation and so forth—in conversation. I thought of conversation as mere words arranged in the form of epigrams and original and amusing remarks. In the chapter called "The Part the Voice Plays," however, Mr. Kleiser makes it clear that the best conversation is impossible without a proper use of the lungs, the larynx, and the jaw muscles. The lover of the future, before he delivers himself of his epigram or compliment, will see to it that his jaw-muscles are in order. "One good way of obtaining freedom of the jaw-muscles," says Mr. Kleiser, "is to imitate yawning. This relaxes the throat-muscles and gives flexibility to the lower jaw and the lips, which promotes freedom of voice production." It is inadvisable, I fancy, however, to practise this exercise in presence of the beloved. Nor would some of the other exercises recommended, if practised by Romeo in her presence, be likely to make a favourable impression on Juliet. For example:

> Open the mouth as widely as possible, forming a large O with the lips. Keep the tongue flat, so that you can see the uvula, a little pointed flap that hangs at the back of the mouth. Close the mouth sharply.

Again, many a high-strung girl in her teens might grow hysterical if she saw an adoring would-be conversationalist engaged in performing the following exercise:

> Lower the bottom jaw till the teeth are about an inch apart. Stretch the mouth sideways as far as it will go. Hold it in this position for a few seconds, then quickly thrust the lips forward as far as you can, imitating a child's action in pouting.

Would Helen, on seeing these extraordinary facial contortions, be moved to cry out, "Paris, thy beauty is to me," and be reminded by the expression of that classic face of the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome? I doubt it. If, on the other hand, she saw Paris exercising his jaws in this fashion

> Open the mouth slightly, and move the jaws vigorously from side to side, so that there is a slightly audible sound from the joints behind the ears,

she might be struck with admiration of his cleverness. All children like to hear joints cracking, and there was a good deal of the child in Helen.

There is only a small part of Mr. Kleiser's book, however, devoted to the improvement of the jaw-muscles. What the jaw says, not how it works, his main theme; and here, I confess, I have found him both sound and enlightening. For example, he is rightly in favour of a little fun at the dinner-table:

> A good story at the dinner-table is a boon rivalling the finest viands in deliciousness. Spontaneous wit is even rarer and more precious. In a discussion of the causes of panics, or of the place of Latin in education, a humorous sally is not out of place. It may even throw light on the question at issue; it lessens tension when argument waxes so warm that it is in danger of arousing personal feeling.

Horrified though he is by the increase in the use of slang, Mr. Kleiser will even permit an occasional slang expression as a means of lightening the conversation:

> Even the purist might be forgiven a sneaking liking for a "tightwad." It is a picturesque figure of speech. Once in a while it might be allowed if accompanied by a smile and an intonation which were equivalent to quotation marks.

I must practise that quotation-marks smile and intonation when next I call a cigarette a "gasper."

It will be seen from these quotations that, in his views on conversation, Mr. Kleiser is no killjoy. He believes profoundly in cheerful conversation on cheerful subjects, and one of his most useful paragraphs is that in which he tells us how to turn the conversation from an unpleasant into a pleasant channel.

> This takes tact and a quick wit, but it can generally be done. If, for instance, someone is dwelling on the symptoms of a disease, you can introduce an apropos anecdote of some medical man or treatment, or some Old World cure, or curious charm; an account of the gloomy horrors of prison life can be made to lead up to some general topic, such as the after-care of prisoners, the social aims of justice, the vagaries of the law, famous trials, and so on.

If these principles were universally acted upon, how many a dinner-party might be saved from gloom and become almost as cheerful as a public-meeting!

Mr. Kleiser, indeed, is always right, I have read the book through, and I have not found a single point on which he is open to serious criticism. He is right down to the end where he gives advice on pronunciation. Do not, he says, pronounce "Tuesday" as "Toosday," "Umbrella" as "Umberella," "Athletic" as "Athaletic," "Gymnasium" as "Gymmynasium," or "Precipitate" as "Percipitate." Could one ask for better counsel than this? Can anyone deny that Mr. Kleiser is absolutely sound? If I had possessed this book in my early teens the whole course of my life might have been changed, and a beautiful woman might now be somewhere remembering a brilliant boy conversationalist instead of forgetting the misshapen-nosed walking statue that adored her.

Y. Y.

THE TRIGGER OF EVOLUTION

RECENT advances in experimental genetics have conjured out of the mists of nightmarish fantasy a Frankenstein monster and dragged it into the lighted circle of ultimate probability. Mankind, meddlesome, restless and curious, is even now about to grasp that branch of the tree of knowledge the taste of whose fruit will confer on him an awful power, the power to control the very process of evolution, at first in the lower organisms and finally in Man himself.

Nearly five years ago an eminent American biologist, Professor H. J. Muller, announced that he had succeeded in the production of artificial mutations in the fruit fly, and more recently he has shown the means and pointed the implication of the translocation of chromosome material. Without some knowledge of the mechanism of heredity it is not easy to appreciate the significance of these discoveries. Like Faraday's researches in electricity, they provide the elements from which future generations may conceive and bring forth uncanny inventions. Armed with a technique the theory for which is emerging from these researches of Muller and his colleagues and the cytologist T. S. Painter, our descendants will be able to produce from human stock monsters, geniuses, and creatures as different from Man as Man is from the Apes. Unprepossessing parents will be enabled to beget beautiful children and people of low intelligence brilliant offspring if invention does not fall far short of discovery in the mechanics of biological evolution.

Amazing as are such speculations, they are of less real interest than the theoretical, but very significant, implications carried by these same genetical discoveries and those of the period covering the last two decades. In the light of all this new knowledge we are better able than were our fathers to envisage the probable process of organic evolution. It is something quite other than that of Darwinian natural selection through the competition of individual organisms

of similar type. Outside the Bible belt of North America the principle of organic evolution has been accepted as an article of common sense. But Darwin's explanation of how it happens does not to-day receive in the scientific world the respect that it formerly enjoyed.

Human knowledge tends by accretion and elimination to become ever more precise. The physiology of reproduction and the mechanism of inheritance were little understood in Darwin's days. A mass of evidence to-day indicates that though competition and natural selection do take place in the organic world, these processes, notwithstanding the elimination of the trilobites and the archeopteryx, and the deadness of the dodo, are insufficient to account for the creation of new forms. How the elephant got his trunk and the leopard his spots, how the multitude and diversity arose in the world of organisms, the sparrow, the spirochaete and the sundew, Man, the cassowary and the convolvulus, was supposed to be satisfactorily explained by the theory of natural selection. Having ceased to entertain seriously the naive pentateuchal fable, we became at length more radical than Darwin, and learned to doubt the picturesque Lamarckianism that animates Mr. Kipling's charming stories of just how it happened. We (that is all of us excepting Mr. Bernard Shaw) agreed to Weissman's principle that alterations in the person or personality of an individual could not be passed on to his offspring by bodily inheritance. Then it began to be understood that the remarkable discovery of Mendel was applicable, not only to a few outstanding characteristics in the pea and the barn-door fowl, but to practically all inheritance in all living forms. So we had to reconsider the selection theory. To Darwin and his contemporaries who fought for it so stoutly, natural selection was a necessity for the occurrence of evolution. As we now see it can only deflect the direction in which evolution proceeds.

Since we have a clearer view of what Darwin called variation, that is, differences in individual plants or animals of the same parents, since we know now that variation is something quite different from what Darwin thought it was, we are able to view natural selection as irrelevant to the actual origin of new varieties of plants and animals. Exactly how effective as a destructive agent it is has been worked out with a close approximation to accuracy by J. B. S. Haldane. The possibility of its producing a new species has never been demonstrated. Darwin and his disciples postulated a continual slow and minute alteration in the character of living things into living things of another type. They pictured evolution as a creeping process. To-day we picture it as a leaping process. Not gradual, imperceptible and continual changes, but sudden, erratic and obvious mutations are the means by which living forms alter. The mutant forms, Man with a joint missing in each of his fingers, a fly with vestigial wings, a flower with a new colour, transmit their new character in full, but not in excess, to a definite proportion of their offspring, a definite proportion of which continue to breed true to the new type.

This picture of the behaviour of mutant characters has been independently confirmed by deductions from the microscopic study of cell nuclei. Mendel's discovery of the segregation and transmission of hereditary characters preceded the discovery of the chromosomes, the minute bodies in the cell nucleus like pairs of bent and straight rods that bear the hereditary traits; but he described their behaviour in much the same way that the chemist Mendeléeff described the properties of the element germanium before its discovery. Along each chromosome, like beads on a string though they have not actually been observed, are supposed to lie the genes. Chromosome maps have been constructed. The fruit fly, the sweet pea, and the fowl have been mapped, and the exact position of particular genes on each chromosome indicated. It is the change in a gene that gives rise to a mutant character. There is abundant evidence for all these suppositions.

Mutation is infrequent with a slow breeding animal like Man. But what takes place in natural conditions can be judged from observations in the laboratory on an animal that goes rapidly through its generations like the fruit fly. Normal red-eyed flies continue, for, say, a thousand generations, to produce their kind. Then apparently without rhyme or reason a white-eyed mutant type arises, the offspring of which mated *inter se* produce red and white types in the correct Mendelian proportions. A particular gene in a particular location on a particular chromosome has been affected. All the known conditions of breeding have remained constant. What is the secret spring that has set the machinery of mutation in motion? It is as yet undiscovered, but there is a hint of it from Muller's work.

The penetrative power of short-wave radiations is well known. Clinical practice makes use of both X-rays and the radiations from radium. Also, the lethal effect of these rays on the germ cells of animals is employed to effect sterilisation in man. A weaker than the lethal dose might cause a disturbance in the nucleus of the germ cells sufficient to affect the chromosomes without injury to the cell. Muller applied X-rays to the sperm cells of the fruit fly with the result that he got true mutant characters arising in the offspring. That the mutations thus induced are not chance ones is obvious from their frequency, which is 150 times higher than the normal mutation frequency. Subsequently Hanson got similar results by using, in place of X-rays, the gamma rays from radium. The technique is now being applied to industrial research, and interesting results in the way of mutant forms have been obtained in experimenting with such plants as cotton, tobacco, maize, and barley. In Drosophila permanent modifications have been effected in the size and colour of the eye, in the venation, cut, and size of the wing, and both dominant and recessive mutations have been induced. It is not possible at present, however, to tell beforehand which genes will mutate or even which chromosomes will be affected, nor is it possible to avoid a high percentage of sterility. But there is no reason to suppose that in time the technical difficulties will not be overcome and a high degree of control achieved.

Drosophila melanogaster, that humble insect whose matings and begettings are recorded by scientists with more fidelity than the quarterings of the bluest blood by the College of Heralds, has four pairs of chromosomes of known size and shape. In examining microscopically the germ cells of certain " rayed " insects, Muller and Painter have observed something which indicates a greater change than a gene mutation. In these cells a piece of one chromosome has broken off and attached itself to another chromosome not homologous to it. That is, not merely exchange of material between pairs of chromosomes, which is a comparatively common event, but an alteration of the chromosome pattern has taken place. Since any given pattern is common to one species of animal or plant only, this translocation probably means that the species can be changed at a single stroke. The application of this knowledge to the species problem is sufficiently obvious.

It is curious to reflect how men playing about with little flies can raise two issues, one practical and one theoretical, than which it would be difficult to imagine any more weighty. The extension of Muller's technique from flies, flowers, and fowls to human beings, wisely handled and with perfect mastery of the instrument, might lead to a happy solution of many of mankind's perplexities. But if Man acquires no greater wisdom in the management of his resources than the present day promises, his childish fumbling may breed a brood of monsters surpassing his wildest dreams, and the avenues of invention may lead to unimagined regions haunted by the outlandish shapes of Edgar Allan Poetic fantasy.

It is a reasonable inference from Muller's experiments that the natural stimulus to mutation is some form of short wavelength radiation. Neither X-rays nor gamma rays

are so widely distributed in nature as to be likely to affect all living organisms. But the complete range of radiant energy has yet to be explored. The cosmic rays from out beyond the solar system may be the trigger that releases the spring of evolution; and it is not unlikely that Man rose from his lowly origin, not by the petty internecine warfare between brother organisms, but by the energy of the stars in their courses. AUTOSOME.

NO JOKE

He [President Hoover] will send representatives . . . only if tariff rates are excluded from discussion and reparations and debts are treated as if they did not exist.—Times, June 6th.

HARD is the jester's lot whose themes,
Based on the most fantastic dreams
His wayward fancy can evoke,
Yet strike his hearers as no joke
But common every-day affairs.
Such is my lot as one who wears
The cap and bells. I sought of late
Some new device to illustrate
What people mean who talk about
A *Hamlet* with the prince left out;
And casting round, "Suppose," said I,
"We spoke of Britain's food supply
In terms of the dessert we eat,
And quite forgot the grain and meat.
Suppose, in further illustration,
That doctors, met in consultation,
Discussed the weather and their fees,
Prescriptions, symptoms, what you please
Except the cause of the disease.
Suppose"—and here I felt a thrill
At dreaming something sillier still—
"A conference were held to find
Some method to relieve mankind
From all the manifold afflictions
That flow from debts and trade restrictions;
Yet tariffs, reparations, debt,
Were barred before the conference met
From being talked about at all."
Alas! how flat the joke would fall:
My wildest dream appears to-day
Accepted in the U.S.A.
As just a simple explanation
Of policy which God's own nation
Thinks wholesome, practical and meet—
I give it up: I can't compete.

MACFLECKNOE.

Correspondence

A NEW CURRENCY

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Mr. Davenport's post-mortem on the deceased international monetary organism is admirably done; but there are one or two points in his second demonstration which I should like to leave for his consideration.

First, while admitting that exchange-credits might still function to redress temporary disequilibria in the balance of *payments* between two countries both "off gold," I cannot see how this system would redress long-term disequilibria in their balance of *trade* (all items). Does Mr. Davenport propose that Britain, for example, shall be regularly altering her sterling rates on every other "off-gold" centre in order to redress long-term disequilibria, while utilising the exchange-credit method merely for short-term disequilibria? If so, I see a second point which, to my mind, calls in any case for further elucidation.

I presume Mr. Davenport would have to invoke a complete State mechanism to wield control over all foreign trade as well as over home and foreign investment. For if, as he says, we could let our exchange rates on the remaining "on-gold" centres "find their own level," I imagine there would be, without such completeness of State control, a violent impetus toward arbitrage operations *via* the "on-gold" centres whenever the "official" rates in London could thereby be bettered. It seems to me that in this "on-gold" and "off-gold" controversy one cannot have one's cake and eat it. Either we stick to an "off-gold" bloc and control foreign exchange, or we go "on gold" again. But we cannot leave financiers the golden opportunity of evading official rates by going through "on-gold" currencies.

I am aware of the limits within which Mr. Davenport has had to deal with this pertinent question; that is why I think it only fair to ask him "for more." D. GRAHAM HUTTON.

London, S.W.1.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—There are many who wish for nothing better than a return, sooner or later, to the old-fashioned gold standard; there are others who desire much more amenable monetary systems. Though I belong to the second of these groups and am an advocate of monetary reform, I nevertheless find myself in disagreement with much that Mr. Davenport has written in his New Currency articles, and should like to make the following criticisms:

The gold standard had its deficiencies, but surely it is extravagant to say "that the gold system of international exchange . . . is, in fact, the cause of the present breakdown of international trade," and to ignore the influence of such prime causes as war treaties, the increase in number and aggressiveness of fiscal frontiers, or the rise of economic nationalism, with all the tariffs, quotas, war debts, reparations, unbalanced budgets, or unwise loans that have followed. To ask "Is it equitable . . . to prevent the debtor country repaying its debts in services and goods?" and then to suggest that this is the effect of the gold exchange standard is also to ignore obvious facts. Such over-statements only weaken the case for monetary reform; they also endeavour—which is worse—to mislead us into thinking that currency control can reverse the political policies that in almost every country have produced the major causes of the breakdown of international trade.

This currency question is essentially international, and is it not a mistake to ignore existing international institutions that may be usefully employed? I suggest it would be better, as Sir A. Salter urges in his *Recovery*, to use the League of Nations and to proceed by such steps as the following:

(a) Under League auspices, persuading as many countries as possible to come to a definite and binding agreement as to the goal of their monetary policies.
(b) Letting the Central Banks of these countries consult and co-operate through the Bank of International Settlement.
(c) Rectifying the position if gold becomes too scarce (or too plentiful) through a simultaneous alteration of the legal reserves or a simultaneous change in the gold content of their currencies by the Governments concerned.
(d) Ultimately allowing the Bank of International Settlement itself to issue notes, which the Central Banks might hold in place of gold.

It must be remembered that monetary systems should have two ends in view:

(1) In general they should maintain world prices at a fairly constant level.
(2) Between each other they should maintain the same relative value.

It is in the first respect that the gold exchange system has broken down, and in this respect reform along the lines of Sir A. Salter's suggestion holds out greater hope than the proposals of Mr. Davenport. The latter scheme, for instance, would appear to deal only with direct trade between countries, and trade which showed an even "balance"; but most trade is triangular if not even more indirect, and we must always expect a lack of visible balance. Also it presupposes our agreement to accept all payments in goods (I wish we were prepared to do so), but how is this going to overcome our apparently none too ephemeral protectionist policies?

It may be easy to say that the international price level has gone up or down to a point that needs correction, but it is a very different thing to base a monetary system on an international price index. Those who have had to defend our own Cost of Living Index realise the difficulty of persuading people of its correctness. The problem becomes infinitely more complicated when it has to embrace nations where almost every article has a different,

sometimes utterly different, significance. Sir A. Salter probably realises these facts better than most people; when he states that a managed world currency "needs a degree of international trust which does not seem to exist," his internationally controlled gold exchange system seems more likely to prove practical than one that relies so largely on statistics.

I am afraid this letter is already too long to deal adequately with the second and national requirement of a monetary system, i.e., to maintain its same relative value to other currencies and to keep internal prices in line with world prices. Confining ourselves on this point to the United Kingdom, I do not believe it can be maintained that the gold standard has been the cause of our failure. It is true that our internal price level refused to move with international prices, but that was because of rigidity in our industrial and economic structure, a rigidity which drove us into unprecedented unemployment, and not because of our monetary system.

Mr. Davenport inveighs against the "inhuman" gold standard method, automatic for nearly a century, of weak exchanges, high bank rates, and business depression. But he quite fails to demonstrate how his method is any more human, for he says that when national prices are too high "the right process to reverse inflation is to lower wages and to bring about less consuming power." It is unfortunate that he did not give more precise details of this "process to reverse inflation," as on it hangs the whole problem of keeping internal and external prices in line. It raises some most important issues, on which there is much to be said.

One further point which it is impossible to let pass unchallenged is Mr. Davenport's assumption in his engineering firm example that if you reduce production costs you therefore must either increase profits or raise wages. Has he forgotten that there are alternative results, and one, particularly to-day, a reduced price to the consumer, is the most likely outcome of all?

The Davids, Northfield, Birmingham. L. J. CADBURY.

A MANAGED CURRENCY

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—It is a commonplace that the value of a token currency can only be assessed in terms of its purchasing power; if it has no intrinsic value it must still be wedded to quantities of commodities which it will buy. The formation of a list of commodities presents considerable difficulties; changes in the relative values of different items in the list seem inevitable, so that even if the mean or sum keeps fairly constant there will still be producers and consumers who are at times prejudiced or favoured by such changes.

In the last analysis costs of production of all commodities resolve themselves into the cost of labour; even the return on capital employed is a payment for the stored products of labour. It seems, therefore, that the basis of value of a token currency will be most satisfactory if it is the total of things and services representing a standard wage adapted to the country's "standard of living." That is, the pound sterling, in our case, should represent a definite fraction of what the average worker of all classes needs for the maintenance of that standard. That means that the prices of British products would really be in terms of the labour and capital employed in their production. To foreign customers the pound sterling would be the price of so much British labour; the pounds paid for imports the equivalent in such labour or its products.

Necessarily, to formulate such a basis, prices of staple foods, clothing, etc., would have to be used; but rents and certain essential services would also have to be included; and in future adjustments it would not be the prices of individual items which would need consideration so much as the whole "cost of living." There would have to be some arrangement by which changes in the amount of currency would be transmitted to the incomes of workers; though to some extent such adjustments would be automatic. It may be objected that this entails State regulation of wages; but that seems avoidable—the "cost of living" standard would not be a standard wage.

It hardly seems necessary that there should be an international currency. The "bill on London" would have currency as in the past, so long as London retained its place as the central exchange mart of the world.

This plan is not suggested as an improvement on a gold-based currency; that still seems to me a very satisfactory basis, *if* the free use of gold for redressing temporary unbalances of international trade can be resumed. After all, the value of gold is related to the cost of labour and capital in extracting it. It is futile to expect that the costs of production of different things will have constant relative values; the value of a man's work is primarily the cost of keeping him and his dependents alive, fit, and efficient. That seems a good basis for a standard of value; it would follow changes in the standard of living as these occurred.

Streatham. HENRY M. SAYERS.

THE INDIAN IMPASSE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—The article "An Indian Impasse" in your issue of May 7th is admirable, and has made many of us here feel that at last some of the truth reaches England, past the blanket of official propaganda, backed by that censorship which Sir Samuel Hoare has denied by implication in the House of Commons. Our able Secretary for India is a master of the art of implication, as witness his reply to Mr. J. S. Wardlaw Milne's question in the House on May 23rd, asking

> If Congress Volunteers, who claimed to control the Hindus (they do not), had actively supported the Government in the restoration of order (during the recent Bombay Riots).

The official reply was

> far from helping, the Volunteers had been in certain cases a public danger, and in all cases a public nuisance.

The facts are that the Congress Volunteers are a specially proscribed section of an illegal body, and therefore could not offer help to the Government forces, which would be bound to refuse, and to arrest their would-be assistants. Actually Congress Volunteers were withdrawn, as much for their own safety and preservation to carry on the conflict after the riots as for any other reason. The Volunteers of whom complaint was made as a public danger were chiefly the Khilafat Volunteers, drilled by a retired naval officer, and organised by Maulana Shaukat Ali, whose avowed intention and interest is to "smash Congress."

The art of implication is too long and life too short to give you more than the one topical example of the continual falsification of the facts for the benefit of the British public. A further form of muzzling which is not quite so obvious is the economic censorship imposed on all members of large commercial firms, whose employers naturally, if mistakenly, follow the Government blindly, and who consequently forbid their employees to speak or write anything in public which may show that Congress has a shadow of right on its side. I am therefore obliged to remain, Sir, anonymous. AENGUS-OG.

May 28th, Bombay.

THE KENYA LAND COMMISSION

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—One may sympathise very much with Lord Olivier's appeal to Mr. Kenyatta and the Kikuyu Association not to boycott the Kenya Land Commission, and yet feel that his lordship displays something of our fine old English incapacity to see things from the other fellow's point of view—if the other fellow is a foreigner.

In essence, Lord Olivier appeals to Mr. Kenyatta to believe, despite "regrettable circumstances," in English impartiality and disinterestedness; precisely those qualities in which, at this particular time of day, a good many Indians and Africans find it so difficult to believe—they having only the facts of past and recent history to go upon. After all, it would have been possible to make our disinterestedness apparent to even the meanest African—or Anglo-African—intelligence by the simple process of putting an African on the Commission. (We did invite Indians to take part in the Round Table Conference.) Our failure to do this strikes the other fellow's eye—in the existing atmosphere of doubt and suspicion—more markedly than the wording of the Commission's terms of reference, significant though these may be.

A Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge once arrogated to itself the right to decide what was, and what was not, "useful knowledge" for the poor. The poor, in time, grew suspicious. If, while formally proclaiming "the paramountcy of native interests," we insist on keeping in our own hands the power to decide what native interests are, we can hardly be surprised if the Africans grow suspicious too.

J. F. HORRABIN.

72 Gower Street, W.C.1.

NATIVE LABOUR

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—In his article "From Bad to Worse in South Africa" your Johannesburg contributor, "M," does not mention a point in connection with the Native Service Contract Bill which may be of interest to you. I refer to the remarkable similarity between the terms of this Bill and the Kenya Ordinance of 1918 "to take measures for the regulation of the squatting or living of natives in places other than those appointed for them by the Government of the Protectorate"; the latter is described in Dr. Norman Leys' *Kenya*, pp. 293–298. In both measures the essential motive is the enforcement of labour (as contrasted with rent-paying) tenancies. (In the South African Bill the landlord may call up his labour at such times as he pleases during the year, so dividing the period as to make it impossible for the tenant to obtain employment elsewhere for any continuous period.) Just as Dr. Leys showed that the Kenya Ordinance marked an advance in the legal status of the native, so the insistence in the South African Bill upon written contracts, even upon harsh terms, may be welcomed as an improvement upon tenancies at will.

It will be curious if General Hertzog's acceptance of our sovereign independence within the British Commonwealth of Nations is signalised by collaboration between the back-veld Boer and the ex-public school boy in Kenya, with the object of keeping the nigger in his place. N.

South Africa.

O.T.C.s

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I had hoped that the spate of hysterical letters on this subject was about to come to a speedy end, but I see it is not so. I have just donned my "kit" in preparation for parade. I do not feel particularly aggrieved, nor on the other hand particularly patriotic. I am neither keen nor efficient as a cadet: nor on the other hand am I an "unreasoning rebel"—to quote Mr. Raymond Mortimer.

In my view the "corps" performs a necessary and vital function—that of safety-valve. Boys can grumble all day long about it, and there is room for much humour and satire at its expense. It prevents ridicule and dislike of other and more important institutions.

Why all this neurotic excitement over such an (unintentionally) humorous body? (CADET) LANCE-CORPORAL.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I should like to point out a mistake Mr. Cleage and many other correspondents in other papers have made concerning the merits of school O.T.C.s. I feel sure they are in error when they portray them as active tyrannies. The opposite is quite the case. There is as much tyranny in compulsory games as there is in the O.T.C. It is run on the same lines. "Charity" lance-corporals are unknown in our "corps." No promotion is given until Certificate A is passed. "Blustering fourth formers" do not shout their way to anything unless they prove themselves efficient: and that efficiency is by no means merely physical.

Indifference should surely be the last quality indigenous in a *normal* boy. The normal boy tries to get what good he can out of anything with which he comes into contact: the O.T.C. is no exception. There is plenty of good in it. Its efficiency leads to snobbery, pride, and jingoism among the few, but not the majority. If it did, it would have been abolished directly such consequences were observed. Public schools are not mad-houses, as some people seem to imply.

The evil of "corps" lies in a far different direction. Underlying its undoubted virtues, its efficiency, endurance, good temper, and humour (by *no* means absent)—which, after all, a game, as rugger, teaches just as well—is its *spirit:* and *that* spirit only one other "game" possesses. That game is war. The O.T.C. is permeated with a spirit of ruthlessness, of lack of sympathy, of the entire absence of the personal touch, of the conversion of man into machine. "Survival of the fittest" is its creed. Suspicion is bred not only in it, but it creates suspicion outside it, which is a far greater evil.

"Corps" is a ridiculous mimic of war; yet constant mimicry, in its very monotony, may be just as potent as the most eloquent persuasion. The Prussians were blind to the terrible vices of the belligerent spirit, the Prussianism, they were creating. They saw only its virtues. But the former overcame the latter. The O.T.C. breeds that same spirit of myopic spartanism, of false nationalism.

It is a ramp of the War Office, comparable to the Tory ramp of October: both were deceptions. "Corps" is incipient war. And war is not Christian. That is the greatest argument.

RUGBEIAN.

THE SMALL FARMER

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—The agricultural articles by S. L. B. always suggest the practical farmer, and his article of May 28th is no exception. But it seems to me that our object is not only to make agriculture successful, but at the same time to retain as many people as possible on the land; and surely the systems suggested, if they are not developed, can only lead by the use of machinery to fewer employed on the land. Our family, for generations, have been tenant farmers; my life has been spent in close and personal contact with farm workers and small farmers, and I am sure S. L. B. is right when he says the small farm is no longer an economic unit. But I believe there is a way by which the small farmer can yet carry on and enjoy all the benefits which accrue to the large farm. If you can secure this you will keep a far larger number employed on the land. I have often advocated a large estate of say 1,000 or 1,500 acres in which a dozen small farms would be merged, each farmer representing and controlling some special section for which he is most suited. There would of course be a central control. The combined capital would enable them to have all the best machinery, stock, sufficient manures, and to take advantage of the markets in a way they could never do as small farmers. Instead of a large farm owned by one man, with a score of employed workers, we should have a dozen families engaged and interested in the farm—surely a better proposition.

I would willingly give full details of my humble scheme to any interested person. May I end by saying that I wish S. L. B. could be sure of his plain words meeting the eye of more farmers than they are likely to in THE NEW STATESMAN. In other words I hope they will appear in some agricultural paper.

Sanatorium Farms, Wissington, Nayland, Suffolk. LUTHER M. RUSSELL.

THE COST OF LITIGATION

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—In your comments on the famous judicial quarrel, which appeared in your issue of last Saturday, you have hit the nail on the head in the most thorough-going fashion in your remarks regarding the excessive cost of litigation.

You attribute it in large measure to the old-fashioned method of long-hand notes of evidence being taken by the judges themselves instead of an official shorthand writer being employed. As a solicitor of nearly 45 years' standing I entirely agree with you. It is bad for the litigant, as it vastly increases the cost of litigation, and it is, I venture with fear and trembling to suggest, bad for the judges themselves, as much holograph writing is wearisome to the flesh and the spirit, especially as one advances in years.

On the question of its effect on the cost of litigation may I give you the bare facts of a case in which I was recently professionally engaged? It was an action involving the ownership of quite a small business. The trial lasted nine days, and the counsels' fees incurred by the defendant, with refreshers, amounted in all to £560. If there had been an official shorthand writer the case would probably not have occupied more than half that time, and the daily transcript of the shorthand notes of the evidence would hardly have cost more than about £80. Hence on a rough calculation there would have been a saving of about £200 a side. Is there no Member of Parliament sufficiently interested to put a question to the Attorney-General on this really important question? LONDON SOLICITOR.

INSURANCE SUPPLEMENT—A CORRECTION

The Guardian Assurance Company, Limited, write to correct an error in the figures which they supplied to our Insurance Supplement of May 21. The figures referring to the Guardian Assurance Company in columns 1 and 5 of the Comparative Table should read £461 and £656 respectively.

Miscellany

THE SLANG OF THE GERMAN SOLDIER IN THE GREAT WAR

NOW that the tumult and the shouting dies, now that the hysteria of the "national" newspapers is viewed askance, now that the latrine war books, on the one hand, and the Angels-of-Mons type of absurdity, on the other, are fast becoming discredited and have, indeed, been dismissed as "stunts," we can talk of the long and deadly struggle of 1914–1918 with something like equanimity. We do not necessarily believe a writer on war politics because he happens to have held a too prominent position during those critical years, we do not deferentially accept a general's tirade as gospel truth, nor, at the opposite extreme, do we give much weight to the internationalist bestiality of a private possessing no more than a cleverly tricked out knowledge gleaned in a hospital from weary soldiers recently come from the Front Line (*Schützengraben*, the "Shooting-Gallery" of the Tommy), or to the artistic and mediumistic reconstruction by a man that was not "there" at all. We can think kindly of our foes, whether "the gallant dead" or the no less gallant living. Only perverters of the public mind now speak glibly of "the horrid Hun" and fail to remember that almost every British soldier can attest the humanity and thoughtfulness, as he must vividly recall the fortitude, of the German soldier, while the quiet heroism and the willingness to "carry on" of the German civilian have not yet been adequately described to the English public. All this may now be recognised without more than a few armchair patriots or cast-iron professional soldiers raising a cry of treachery or bringing an indignant charge of blind Germanophilism.

Public opinion would be still more humanised if it could be made to comprehend the courage, the resourcefulness, the humour, and the hatred of cant displayed by the German common soldier. One of the best ways to understand these qualities is to study the slang of the men in question. That slang necessarily depends for its basic characteristics on the genius of the German language. Without analysing all life out of that arresting entity, German soldiers' slang, one can note a few of the constant and powerful factors that go to make it what it is: its compounds, picturesque at their best and ponderously unwieldly at their worst; realistic vividness, conveying a picture sometimes Dutch in its faithfulness and sometimes brilliant in its impressionism; a materialism that is either trenchantly despondent or earthy-comfortable; a grossness sometimes Rabelaisian; a droll humour, either puckish or generous; a cynicism that may be sly and good-humoured, or direct and terrible, the latter characteristic being understandably prominent if we consider all that the German N.C.O. and private had to tolerate and endure; and the malicious or the drily humorous sarcasms and ironies directed at officers.

The various classes of soldier are for the most part aptly named. An Infantryman was a *mud-eater*, *mile-eater*, *mile-pig*, *foot-shuffler*, *puddle-splasher*. The far-famed Jäger was variously called a *grasshopper*, *cockchafer*, *tree-frog*, *quack-quack*. The Hussar was a *Death's head*, a *pack-thread* or *straps-youth* (from the laces and facings); if a Red Hussar, a *glow-worm*. The lowly Pioneer got such names as *earth-rat* and *mole* (to attempt to distinguish between the synonymous *Erdratte* and *Maulwurf*), *pick-axe*, *ram-buck* (note the pun). One debased the magnificent Cavalryman to a *sack-rider*, *sole-preserver*, *mud-stamper*, *horse-onion shaker*, while the now "legendary" Uhlan became a mere *wooden head*, *toad-spitter* or *-sticker*, and, on account of his lance, a *lamp-lighter*. The Artillery was, by abbreviation, *Ari* or, playfully, *Young Barbara*, a Gunner a *field* or *common hare*, *field-banger*, *post-man*; a Trench-Mortar man a *footer*, *boomer* (boom!). A Telegraphist (one of the specialists among the very versatile German signallers) was generally known as a *string-puller*, *T-carrier* (from the *T* on his shoulder-straps), *semicolon-strategist*; a Telephonist, with poignantly brief reference to his many trials and troubles, a *wirer*. The Cyclist Company aptly moved as *the tossing brigade*, a member thereof as a *wire-donkey rider*. Those lucky enough to belong to the Band were derisively called *tin-puffers* or *-blowers*, even *verdigris-spitters*. And recruits, no matter which arm of the Service might claim them, were *greenies*, *callow boys*, *greenhorns*, *wethers* or *bell-wethers*, *dung-beetles*, and—worse.

Some of the slang names for Non-Commissioned Officers and Officers are significant. An N.C.O. was a *spider* or a *uniform-stallion*, a Corporal *over-bull*, a Sergeant a *joker*, a Company Sergeant-Major a *fat of the meat*, *cousin*, *churl*, *company-mother*, *bidder to the funeral*, a Regimental Sergeant-Major a *half-and-half* (neither N.C.O. nor Officer), *bastard-lieutenant*, *lieutenant lance-corporal*, *C.S.M.'s corpse*. A Second Lieutenant was a *star-gazer*, a First Lieutenant a *senior master*. A Captain, a Major, a Lieutenant-Colonel, and (as in the British forces) a Colonel were all called *the old man*, but if a Captain (his horse, by the way, was a *battle-donkey*) were one of the four Company Commanders, he completed *the four knaves*, and the Major, Lieutenant-Colonel and the Colonel were additionally known as *God Almighty* and *maggot-breeder*, the latter being a pun on the double sense of *Raupen*, maggots (and their like) and those thick fringes on epaulettes which distinguished the higher officers. An Adjutant was *the battalion aunt*, *chief clerk*, *maid of all work*, *kaleidoscope*. A Staff-Officer perhaps deserved, or rather would have been glad always to deserve, the envious name of *brandy-officer*. A Chaplain had about forty nicknames, none complimentary and some very blasphemous.

The list of slang terms for various garments and parts of equipment is too rich to be treated as it merits, but certain of the argotic acrobatics and aptnesses cannot be dismissed thus cavalierly. *Louse-catcher* was a shirt, *banana-case* a stocking, *ventilator* a cloak, *gondola* or *dice-box* or *child's coffin* a boot, *corset* or *life-belt* or *stomach-reducer* (likewise *belly-brake* and *tummy-tamer*) a belt, *percussion-cap* a service cap, *battle-hat* or *tulip of the storm* a steel helmet, *Hugo* or *back-warmer* or *chest of drawers* or *Regulation marching-box* a knapsack, *bee-hive* a cholera-belt (*Bienenkorb*, bees in German slang being lice), *tea-* or *coffee-spoon* a spade, *thistle-pricker* or *jack-knife* or (as in English) *tooth-pick* a bayonet, *Laura* or *syringe* or *lath* or *rattle* or *bride* or *crow-bar* or *Brown Bess* (the last three current in Army slang since 1900 or earlier) a rifle.

The names for the more deadly weapons and their missiles are numerous; we select the machine-gun and the (artillery) shell. For the former we have such picturesqueries as *barrel-organ*, *stuttering aunt* and *fairy*, *the tack-tack*, *ma'm'selle of the dots* (*Tippmamsell*; with the mongrelism, compare *der Herr du jour*, the orderly officer), *bean-* and *ball-sprinkler* (the latter a survival from the Franco-Prussian War), the *slater* or *tiler*, *revolver-nozzle*, and *mincing machine*. For the latter: *big bit*, *flower-pot*, *attaché case* and *sample box*, *gift* or *comfort*, *truck*, *furniture van*, and *councillor*, the last three of the larger shells. Those other annoyances, lice, were variously condemned as *foreign trade*, *deserters*, *blind passengers*, *sneaks*, *mess-mates*, *secret patrol*, and *Russians*: they were troublesome in billet and a perfect plague in dug-out; the latter, by the way, was styled the *onion* (and *the heroes'*) *cellar*, *U-boat*, *smoking-compartment*, and *grotto*. With the vivid vocabulary pertaining to the Air Force and the Army Service Corps I feel incompetent to deal.

Food evoked many synonyms. Bread was the principal food, and its slang name *Karo* presumably came from cards: *Karo* being carreau, a diamond: ? "hard as diamonds." Over the numerous graphic terms we must pass in favour of the prolific marmalade: *army fat* and *tonic*, *athlete's grease* and *mixture*, *hero-fat*, *Hindenburg's cream* and *Ludendorff's bounty* and *Kaiser Wilhelm's remembrance butter*, *listening-post's dripping*, *infantryman's impulse*, *life-prolonging grease*, *army-bread rouge*, *tonic* and *cream* and *pap* (etc., etc.) *for the offensive*.

A cigarette was neatly named *monkey-flute, churchyard asparagus, pendulum,* and, as in English, *coffin-nail,* while a cigar merited *stink-* and *refreshment-peg, broom, coat-hanger, fly-killer* and *fly-killer paste, poison-wisp, gas-attack, holiday carrot, Field Grey,* and *glimmer-stick,* this last dating from at least as early as 1900. Special names were given to various kinds of cigar, such as *railway signal-man,* "out at every puff"; *reporter,* "carbonises (*i.e.* gases) frightfully"; *cheerfulness; too crooked glimmer,* "the longer it glows, the more obliquely it burns"; *group-leader* or *corporal,* "has no sympathy"; *hand-grenade,* "to be sent, to be thrown away"; *Wild Rose,* "and the rude boy plucked [it]," a quotation from Goethe's famous poem, *Heideröslein; Hercules,* "only a strong man can smoke one"; *Kaiser Frederick,* "learn to suffer without complaining," a clever allusion; *female cook,* "will go on for ever"; *a quarter's warning* or *notice,* "it *may* draw then"; *Peter,* ". . . went forth (*i.e.*, out) and wept bitterly"; *chess-problem,* "after three moves, mate," with a pun signifying "after three puffs, done for"; *Schiller's Bell,* "the man must go forth" (quotation punning "out"); *King of the Elves,* "obtains justice with trouble and pains" (a quotation from a famous old poem); and *longing,* "only he who knows it, knows what I suffer."

This last group of words will, for apposite allusiveness and inevitability, bear comparison with anything in English or French soldiers' slang. ERIC PARTRIDGE.

SUMMER DANCES

THE uproarious applause at the opening of the ballet season at the Savoy Theatre on Monday must have heartened the promoters—The Camargo, the Vic-Wells Ballet, and The Ballet Club. The audience was a little unsophisticated, no doubt—I judge this from the hearty laughter and chatter near me during the playing of William Boyce's symphony—but they loved the dance and the dancers; and the three ballets given reached a very high level of excellence. The first piece was the now-familiar *Job.* The grouping effects in this "masque for dancing" are pleasantly pictorial; though the scene of the Song of the Sons of the Morning fails to express the vivid, flamelike exultation of Blake's etching. Anton Dolin's Satan was finely exuberant, and Stanley Judson, as Elihu, had a limpid simplicity, an adoring wonder which gave a rare beauty to his dancing. The second ballet was Act II of Tchaikovsky's *Le Lac des Cygnes.* The versatility of the societies concerned in this season could not have been better shown than by the ease with which the performers turned from the interpretation of *Job* to this elegant, delicate fairy-tale. Spessiva, as Odette, kept a suggestion of severity under all her gracefulness, a suggestion that suited the legend—there should be a hint of distress in this bewitched maiden. The dancing was at its best in this ballet—the *pas des quatres* rightly arousing the highest excitement in the audience; but there is a shade too much solemnity in the chorus-dancing, a lack of abandon, an absence of that artfully contrived naturalness which should be the ultimate end of ballet, whether the naturalness be classic, romantic, or grotesque. I looked forward with trepidation to Mr. Spike Hughes' *High Yellow.* If one has seen much negro dancing by negroes, it is hard to bear the imitation by white people. Here, however, one's fears were unnecessary. In this ballet the dancers, with a witty kind of gravity, glossed rather than imitated negro dances. Frederick Ashton, as Bambu, was superb, though he should make more use of his arms. Markova and Doris Sonne, as his sweethearts, were deliciously roguish and drooping; at the end, when Bambu has been banished, two strangers come on land and console the forsaken ones. Then, as the four dance, you can hear the music (Mr. Hughes has a genius for jazz) repeat what the girls must be whispering to each other: "We've each got a man now, Cleo," "Sister, dat's true—ah! it takes two men to make up for that nigger of ours." "Sure thing!" R. E. R.

UNPLEASANTNESS AT THE CAMBRIDGE THEATRE

THE Academy Cinema, under the energetic regime of Miss Cohen, has proved such a success that a smarter sister establishment has just been making its début at the Cambridge Theatre. Here patrons of the beautiful and the good will be as comfortable as they are the reverse in Oxford Street. Such is their reward for well-doing, and both management and patron can be congratulated on the result. A new generation of film-goers, educated and sophisticated up to the nines, has come into being; and there seems to me no reason whatever why the "unusual" film should not be as successful as any other kind. Dealers in slop have, in fact, given up London as hopeless. Londoners, I am told, are impossibly blasé and cynical. They have to be amused by the decadent products of an effete and unhealthy Europe. Fortunately, however, the North of England is still sound. There is no chance there of getting away with anything that has the slightest claims to be intelligent. So for the "Trade." I am unwilling to believe this. I come myself from the North of England, and cannot believe that I am so much cleverer than those of my family who did not make the great trek South. Where is that old saying about Manchester? It is at any rate high time to disprove if possible the melancholy assertions of vested interests, and I hope that if the Cambridge Theatre is as successful as it deserves to be some portion of the profits may go to starting similar ventures throughout the large provincial towns. There are rare moments when one can positively make money by being a trifle more original than one's neighbour. And such a moment, when public education has coincided with a hideous slump in Hollywood, is perhaps at hand.

"*M*" (Mr. Fritz Lang's new film at the Cambridge Theatre) of course was an inevitable film for the Cambridge Theatre. They simply had to have it and would have been blamed by everyone had they not. But it has the fault of so many German films of being better in every detail than as a whole. This may have been partly due to the language difficulty. The English voices which had been attached to the German actors did not perfectly synchronise. I have been told that the film went quicker in German. But there is, I think, more to it than this. The film deals with the Dusseldorf murders. And it may well be a mistake to choose such a revolting subject for a picture, because you have to miss out the point. It was impossible to portray the Dusseldorf murderer at work without making everyone feel sick. Yet, if you do not show the murders you do not have the proper feeling about the murderer, who indeed was sublimely acted and became almost an object of sympathy, owing to the hostility he had excited in Dusseldorf. The straightforward gangster from Chicago has here an advantage over a more neurotic case like the butcher of Dusseldorf. He can be seen on the job.

Such a criticism is I think justified and damaging to the film as a whole. But otherwise the construction of the story is extremely ingenious, dealing as it does with the tracking down of the murderer by the rest of the underworld who are furious with him for having *gaté le métier,* and made it impossible for conventional crooks to turn an honest penny, owing to the unwonted activity of the police.

Fritz Lang extracts the uttermost macabre humour from this wry situation. All the underworld life was cleverly realised by excellent actors (none of them in any sense stars), and the reality of their genuine moral indignation at an unusual form of ill-doing was developed with irony.

"*M*" then, for all its unpleasant subject, has the very rare merit of being a "witty" film, and wit is an unfrequent sojourner in Film Land, where most denizens are far too hustling, extravert and childish, ever to have had time to sit back and smile at the nature of the Universe. One

laughed frequently during "*M*," and with what is called the "wrong side of one's mouth." With all its deficiencies "*M*" is not sentimental, as *Frankenstein, Murders in the Rue Morgue* and other American essays in the macabre have all been sentimental, and as you might say that even *Kameradshaft* and *Mädchen in Uniform* are sentimental. You do not leave the picture glowing agreeably with that warm feeling. You do not carry away the impression that "love is greater than life" or that "truth will prevail." I have seen films which had more unity than "*M*" and were far more organic in their movie-construction. I never have seen another which was so cynical and adult in its general attitude to the Universe. And it is for this reason that we should be grateful to the Cambridge Theatre for having celebrated its birth with "*M*." FRANCIS BIRRELL.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

The Art of Charming

FORTUNATELY, where Miss Irene Vanbrugh is concerned, the actress and not the play is the thing. Even in *The Price of Wisdom*, at the Ambassadors Theatre, where an iron business man bargains for a girl's virtue, an honest colonel blushes to have told a lie, and Miss Vanbrugh herself, as the seductive lady who settles everybody's affairs, is reluctantly compelled to recollections of a deceased husband, she emerges enchanting and triumphant from every situation. The plot—a dastardly attempt on the part of a sauce magnate to cheat a young inventor of his rightful dues and force a girl into companionate marriage—is of no importance. The play is more extravagantly absurd in situation, but often more amusing in dialogue, than the average light comedy. What we go to see is Miss Vanbrugh proving that charm is an art and not a gift. She almost persuades us that the gauche daughter in the case who believes in being natural (and consequently rude) could learn to be delightful in her mother's school. At any rate, we are easily convinced that one must labour to be agreeable. This is the principle that is applied in Miss Vanbrugh's polished art. Not for her the simple solution of losing herself in a role. There is not a look or a gesture which is unstudied nor a telling phrase for which the audience is unprepared. Yet how infinitely more alluring she is than any of the young actresses who, by virtue of being themselves, naively expect to please. Watching her the middle-aged will ponder gleefully on the excellences of their generation, and the young will learn that, in a sense other than physical, nature can be adorned by art.

The Sakharoffs

Clotilde and Alexandre Sakharoff, who are dancing at Daly's, treat their art as a minor, decorative, almost a drawing-room, kind of art. Clotilde Sakharoff, who is very pretty and childish in appearance, seems most at home when she is allowed to be gay or simply happy, in *Le Parfait Bonheure*, *Poème Printanier*, and the Chopin *Valse*. In her graver dances, where the emotion is less simple and obvious, she is like a child devoutly performing a ritual which she does not understand; but perhaps that is what a *Danseuse de Delphes* should be. Alexandre Sakharoff gives the impression that he could express maturer, more complicated emotions, particularly in a religious dance to a Bach *Prelude*. On the whole, like many male dancers, he gets his effects in a sidelong, teasing way, by a contemptuous agility of body rather than by grace or power, and is most impressive when he is a little grotesque; but he is sometimes exceedingly graceful, and rarely grotesque enough to be disturbing, to suggest anything outside the pattern of the dance.

A Life Story

If we leave out the philosophical and religious implications of the fable, the most noteworthy thing about Martinez Sierra's *The Kingdom of God*, now to be seen again at the Westminster Theatre, is its success in giving us a woman's life story. There is here development without any violent dramatic incident; the old nun of seventy years in the last act is the same as the enthusiastic girl of the first. Such a part puts a great strain on an actress's powers; and Miss Scaife does not entirely succeed. She hardly conveys the profundity of Sister Gracia's character and convictions; indeed, the character portrayed by Sierra could only, perhaps, be acted triumphantly by a Latin, used to the atmosphere of Latin Christianity, or by an actress of the very highest genius. Still, Miss Scaife's performance has many beautiful and touching passages, especially in the second act in the maternity home and in her last speech to the rebellious boys. The other performers, especially Mary Sheridan, as Gracia's mother, Harold Young, as the bull fighter, Joan White, as the hysterical Margarita, and John Whitehead, as the leader of the school revolt, are very good.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:

Saturday, June 11th—
- P. F. Warner on "Coming Cricket Events," B.B.C., 6.30.
- "Out of the Bottle," Hippodrome.

Sunday, June 12th—
- "As It Was in the Beginning," Arts.
- "The Treasure," Garrick.

Monday, June 13th—
- André Brulé's Company, Daly's.
- Viscount Cecil and other Speakers on "World Disarmament and Great Britain," Queen's Hall, 8.

Tuesday, June 14th—
- Dr. Agnes Fraser on "A Warrior Tribe," B.B.C., 8.30.
- "Maya," Gate Theatre.

Wednesday, June 15th—
- Mr. George Eumorfopoulos' Collection of Chinese Art, 7, Chelsea Embankment.
- First of Six Lectures on "The United States Constitution," King's College, 5.30.
- Delisle Burns, Maude Royden and other Speakers on "The Export of Arms and Munitions to China and Japan," Caxton Hall, 8.

Thursday, June 16th—
- Prof. F. Soddy on "That Poverty is of God" (2nd of the New Europe Group Lectures), Caxton Hall, 8.30.
- Prof. Arnold J. Toynbee on "Britain's Neighbours," B.B.C., 7.30.

YOU CAN BE SURE OF SHELL

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

I HAVE been reading Mr. J. B. Priestley's *Self Selected Essays* (Heinemann, 5s.). There are some sound, critical things in the book; some excellent passages of observation; but there are also some of the strangest instances of mere carping, a rather puerile, insensitive disagreeableness. Mr. Priestley was near Oberammergau when the Passion play was being produced. He visited the village; he saw the play. He admits he was in no mood to see any play, as he had not attempted to adapt himself to witness what is, for a civilised man, either a religious exercise or a curious mythological survival—and yet he writes a disgruntled little essay, reeking of that odd insular self-satisfaction which Mr. Chesterton has declared is found in nearly all English Victorian writers, attacking the play and the players on lines that will seem absurd to most visitors to Oberammergau. It is remarkable that a man of Mr. Priestley's gifts, however much he was suffering from hunger and weariness, should not realise at the time that the performance of those Bavarian villagers is something by which the spectator is judged, not a thing to be judged. And not to realise this long after the event; to think it worth while to publish so stupidly ungracious a complaint is deplorable to those who would like English authors once more to be slightly aware of European standards. Perhaps Mr. Priestley's ill-temper is the result of a serious suppression. The essay just before that on Oberammergau is a defence of bad pianists; and I can imagine few things more devastating to the nervous system than the accumulation of enough evidence to enable one to defend these miscreants, especially if one numbers oneself—as Mr. Priestley does—in their terrifying ranks.

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As I looked through his book I realised that one could, in considering essayists, make one hard and fast division—the essayists who know what they should not write about, and the essayists who will tackle anything—and, alas, do! How much more sensible and generous it would have been if Mr. Priestley had admitted that he ought never to have gone to see the Passion play, and certainly ought not to have written about it. There are, perhaps, a few essayists known who could write on anything; but they had a natural delicacy which forbad them to attack too unsuitable a subject. I can think of no essay of Lamb's, none of Mr. Beerbohm's in which there is a shadow of inappropriateness between the essayist and his subject. The successful writer of to-day, tempted by editors, tries too many things. Even if an author never goes to the extreme lengths of dignitaries and notorieties, asked for their opinions because of their names, yet he hates to admit too many limitations. He will criticise anything except himself: and one must admit that very often his self is a very unproductive and uncongenial subject. So let a wise essayist stick to subjects that suit him. How admirably at home is Mr. Priestley in *Caledonian Market*, in *Public Dinners*, in *Houses*, in *A Defence of Dull Company*, in *The Prophets*, an account of some speakers in Hyde Park:

> Perhaps they knew the very date when the world was to be withered away and the stars were to drop from the sky like rotten fruit, and had travelled many a league with their soap-box to give us warning; perhaps they were there ready to barter an eternity of bliss for half an hour of our attention, and, because we did not choose to listen, already saw the angel of death making ready his sword above our heads. But no, if they believed that things were at such a desperate pass, surely they would not have been so calm, surely they would have raised their voices and not allowed every roaring fool in the park to catch the attention of the doomed city.

* * *

Mr. Baring is at his best in *Lost Lectures* (Davies, 10s. 6d.). I am surprised to read in his prefatory note that any of the lectures were real, delivered from the platform lectures. They all, delivered or not, have the charm of unpremeditated conversation from a man whose memory is his notebook. Hardly ever does one hear that fatal "I'm telling you" of the born lecturer—the manner by which the less wise dragoon the meek and foolish of the world. It is heard once, however, in a passage which I wish I could think was irony so subtle as to be profoundly obscure.

> I believe it to be also true that there is not an Englishman who would be annoyed to be taken for an Etonian, however deep his conviction may be that Eton is a nursery of snobs or half-wits, but Rugby is more clever and Harrow more tunefully vociferous.

This leaves me gaspingly anxious to feel Mr. Baring's bumps. To be very glad that one was not at Eton is, I suppose, an indication that one would not be flattered to be taken for an Etonian. I must admit—and I hope that Mr. Baring will not think it priggish—that I am profoundly bored by attempts to fix a man's value or importance by reference to the irrelevant fact of his place of education. In circles, however, where that sport is popular I have heard Winchester mentioned. I can assure Mr. Baring that, if ever he would care to annoy anyone who cherishes his school patriotism, he need only say to one educated at Winchester, I suppose you were at Eton. But how good are Mr. Baring's recollections of the school he was at! How admirably he employed that almost continuous leisure, the child of the winding Thames, that can be had apparently so easily by the young Etonian. His character sketches are so gravely drawn, made with so humorous an objectivity, so nice a discretion.

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There is great variety in Mr. Baring's book. Pushkin, Diplomacy, High Brows and Low Brows, Actors, Actresses and Goldfish, Punch and Judy, Gilbert and Sullivan, the Nineties—all come within his survey; and on them all he writes with wit and with an authority rare in one who writes with such lightness and ease. In his essay on the Nineties Mr. Baring provides a very useful correction to the too popular view that the decade was completely Yellow. The essay is particularly good in its recollection of what took the town then in music-hall and theatre. He might, in his brief note on what the low brows read, have added the name of Guy Boothby—now, I suppose, completely forgotten, but then devoured by schoolboys and once, if I do not mistake, praised by Mr. Kipling for his Dr. Nikola. Mr. Baring definitely belongs to the class of essayists who know what subjects they should avoid. His sense of his own range is exquisite; and even if he apparently goes outside it, as he occasionally does, he always recovers himself before the end. I can find little trace in M. Maurois' *A Private Universe* (Cassell, 8s. 6d.) or Mr. Compton Mackenzie's *Unconsidered Trifles* (Secker, 6s.) that their natural talent is for the essay. M. Maurois' talent is for biography, for the lecture, for teaching, for parody, for the most delightful exercises in the criticism of men and women; but he suggests always a physical activity, a practical impatience out of keeping with the true essay. This new book has advice to Frenchmen going to England and America, notes gained during M. Maurois' stay in both countries, papers on love, on the world in 1930 (a diary), on the future . . . in all are M. Maurois' acute intelligence, genial sentiment, and that air of age-long wisdom which the Frenchmen wears as a panache. Mr. Compton Mackenzie is no essayist, but how delightful a book he has written! He has the born novelist's insatiable curiosity about life and people, an unquenchable interest in what he does rather than what he is, and in what his acquaintances do. His papers are slight, and have the freshness and quickness that sketches so often have, but too-long-considered work so often loses. Here is a genuine interest in trivialities from a man who can make the trivial really amusing. Mr. Mackenzie's account of how he ordered two dozen Lynnhaven oysters has something of the gusto and extravagance of the great humorists. RICHARD SUNNE.

A FINE SHOW

Laughing Torso. By NINA HAMNETT. Constable. 15s.

I ought to say at once that I think many people will enjoy reading this book almost as much as Miss Nina Hamnett obviously enjoyed writing it. There is a kind of "showing off" that almost acts vicariously; many writers of memoirs and gossip have discovered this. Rememberers who can give the impression of having moved exclusively among duchesses, diplomats and Prime Ministers, flatter in readers the craving for distinction of birth and manners. Rememberers who remember "naughty-naughtiness" and can pronounce trippingly the names of persons who are believed by the man in the street to have led naughty-naughty lives, flatter the yearning for naughtiness that throbs in the breasts of those whose circumstances have thrust virtue upon them. Miss Hamnett, it seems to me, says, in effect, "*Do* look! Aren't I *naughty*?" and a large number of readers will reply, "Oh, *isn't* she naughty—and, by gosh, I must be a little naughty too—for look—I'm not a bit shocked!"

A very great deal of literary popularity is simply a matter of successful (though usually unconscious) calculation of the vanity of the majority. It should not be very difficult to reckon up the various innocent human vanities ministered to—either deliberately or by chance—by books that have attained to great popularity in the last few years. *If Winter Comes*, *The Constant Nymph*, *The Good Companions*, for instance, all—directly or indirectly—make the reader pat himself on the back. Not that I mean to imply a supercilious reproach when I refer to vanity. Human vanity—that vanity which makes each one of us dare to claim the right to be this lonely and vulnerable thing called *Me*—seems to me a most essential and beautiful thing, and no one can be sneered at who, after reading a book, can say to his doubting inward critic, "There—you see—this book is on my side; I'm not so far wrong after all." The voice that says "This is I," says something brave and significant. The voice that says "I am only I, but this is what I might be, if only things were simpler and easier," is a most appealing and natural voice. But the voice that says "This is what I want you to think I am," is a voice that I find disturbing in the same way as that voice is disturbing which recites Gunga Din at a ship's concert.

There are those who really enjoy watching other people showing off, and feel mysteriously flattered by doing so. These will enjoy Miss Hamnett's book. To "This is what I want you to think I am," she adds: "And lots of famous people agree with me that I make this impression; look at the Sitwells and Robbie Ross and Rudolph Valentino and lots and lots of other celebrities." She gives us a catalogue of well-known names as testimonials to her excellent "Bohemian" character. "This is real life as we care-free artists live it." And so indeed it may be, but if they were really care-free they would none of them take care to write it down. The true lilies of the field not only take no thought for the morrow—they take no thought for yesterday either.

The Wise Thrush, by taking trouble to recapture his first fine careless rapture, actually disproved his own contention. If it *had* been rapture, he wouldn't have cared whether you thought he could do it again or not. Of course I mean by this a mythical bird called Browning's Wise Thrush—not the thrush with a little "t" who sings a real song in real hedges and doesn't know you are listening. Miss Hamnett may well have sung a rapturous song in a real hedge—but I suggest that she now denies her song and her hedge by bearing both so consciously in mind.

It may well be that this book records Real Life; perhaps this apparently self-conscious naughty-naughtiness *is* Real Life, as lived in Paris. Perhaps, while it was being lived, it was not self-conscious. Do we not all know those persons who insist on telling us in words about occasions that really have nothing to do with clever things like words? "Oh, my *dear*—we had *such* fun—Bobbie was awfully tight and would *insist* on taking off all the other men's ties and tying them round his own neck—fourteen of them—we simply *howled*—and then I threw dried prunes at his nose and—oh, my *dear*—I hit Milly's aunt square in the eye—so then we all lay down on the floor and balanced oranges on our chins—you would have *died* laughing. . . ." The thing to remember about these occasions—which fall so flat in words—is that we probably *should* have died laughing, if we had been there. *We* should have been a little tight too; *we* should have felt the glorious feeling of being fine fellows among other fine fellows—if we had been there. We all remember radiant occasions when we *were* there, and *did* die laughing. But the fatal fact is that if we were not there words will never make us feel as if we were; words cannot convey the sense of an occasion which was, happily, senseless. And, speaking for myself, I always feel a deepening gloom as the description of the indescribable goes on.

Miss Hamnett writes in a headlong manner, like the manner of one saying, "I've so frightfully much to tell you that I don't know where to begin." She *does* begin, as a matter of fact, but often does not finish what she apparently meant to say. In the course of several pages of reasonably coherent description of her friendship with Henri Gaudier Brzeska, for instance:

> I knew the bookseller, Dan Rider, who lived near Charing Cross Road. He was a fat little man who roared with laughter the whole time. He knew Frank Harris very well. He also knew Gaudier Brzeska. I went to see him and I said, "Is Brzeska rich?" and he said, "He is very poor"; so I said, "There is a lady who would like lessons in sculpture."

What is Frank Harris doing here? His name—not by itself expressive, surely—is switched on and off again, like an electric light being played with by a child.

> The boat was packed and we had to sit on the deck on some life-buoy boxes and dangle our legs. Suddenly the most handsome and magnificent officer came and shook my friend by the hand. He was some important diplomat's aide-de-camp and was covered with medals of all kind and gold braid. I was introduced to him and we became the centre of interest of all the old ladies and gentlemen. My friends still had my flat in Great James Street and I thought that I would stay there. When I got there I found that they had gone away and taken the key with them.

What of the magnificent officer? The light this time is switched on and off to show nothing whatever except the glitter of a nameless and voiceless man's medals.

> One afternoon I went and she had a ballet girl posing in a pink ballet skirt. She had been a pupil of Sickert's and was doing a painting that had a great deal of talent. I sat in a corner and drew. I was very badly dressed and hid my shoes under the chair. Presently Lord Ribblesdale came in, and Lady Curzon. They were charming and I hid my feet further under the chair, but they neither seemed to notice nor to mind. We continued to draw and they talked about Art.

What did they say? Was it worth saying? Were they in fact worth mentioning? Yes, for they were two more names on the list.

This book, in fact, is theoretically artless. It is supposed to be very easy to be supercilious about artlessness—and very wrong too, like taking candy away from a blind orphan. So it seems to me very unfair for a person to assume artlessness and hide behind it. It is unfair to say, "I'm not really quite grown up—you mustn't mind if I write incoherently because I'm not really grown up enough to write a book at all." It is unfair to say this if you really are grown up. That Miss Hamnett is grown up seems to be proved, not only by the years she so candidly confesses to, but by her drawing, some examples of which (far too few, in my opinion) she gives as illustrations in her book. I know nothing about drawing, and if I were to try to discuss Miss Hamnett's drawing, I could only take a leaf out of her book and disarm criticism by assuming a mask of artlessness. I will only, therefore, record my wish that I had seen more of the work she seems to do so well, instead of meeting her first in a medium which is not her own.

I believe perhaps I am voicing a personal opinion only in resenting Miss Hamnett's deliberately naive assumption. I admit again that there are many readers (and by no means unthinking readers only) who are not repelled by this manner. It is possible that they, having larger sympathies, see more truly than I. It is possible that a mask may be more essentially a part of the identity than the naked face would be. It is possible that one who feels inspired to don a mask may be more truly expressed by the mask than by any natural feature. Therefore, I believe that this book will have much success, both among the simple, who want simply to be deliciously shocked, and among the sophisticated who like to watch the artful wiles of the artless shocker in action. Also, the book will be read by the innumerable personal friends of Miss Hamnett. It is really a book for friends—not for strangers.

STELLA BENSON.

WAR AND PEACE, AND REVOLUTION

Nineteen Nineteen. By JOHN DOS PASSOS. Constable. 7s. 6d.

Nineteen Nineteen is the second part of a big novel in a new manner. Readers of *The 42nd Parallel*, the first part of this novel, will remember the scope of the book—to give a cross-section of American life; and the curious technique employed—a sort of verbal camera-work. The narratives of a number of individual lives ran separately, alternating in strips, and then converged or touched by accident; a newsreel flickered intermittently; there was the further background of public figures memorialised in odd brief biographies. Mr. dos Passos continues this technique in *Nineteen Nineteen*. It is possible now to judge the success of his method, and the magnitude of the undertaking, for though there may be other volumes to follow (Russia seems likely to come under the lens), *Nineteen Nineteen* sets a limit of expansion beyond which a sequel can hardly go.

Mr. dos Passos has attempted a modern *War and Peace*, but a *War and Peace* in which the disintegration of society has already begun below the surface, in which the march of American solidarity—God's Own Country first keeping out of the war and then with a rocket of stars going into it—is only an Independence Day procession from which blacklegs are absent because they are being batoned round the corner. It is not the public structure that interests him, but the cross-section underneath; he gives us, instead of the distant view, these glimpses of vivid swarming units. Thus his picture lacks the emphasis and design of the panoramic novel, and he relies on the vividness, the quick change of the shifting camera. His object is to portray the disintegration of American life in 1900–30, the reverse of the newspaper story, and he uses a method which will reflect disintegration.

The 42nd Parallel ended with America's entry into the war. *Nineteen Nineteen* covers the war and the beginning of the peace. Europe as well as America occupies the scene. They come pouring over, the doughboys, war workers, secretaries, publicity men, Red Cross nurses, heralded by the image of President Wilson and sanctified afterwards by the Fourteen Points; and Mr. dos Passos catches the life of this circulating colony with astonishing zest. The addition of a patter of European languages to his rich American is excellent. He has succeeded in doing what Mr. Hemingway is supposed all along to have done, but actually only hinted at: he has really made Americans talk on paper—not an isolated remark that we seize on as typical or a carefully-set Mutt-and-Jeff dialogue—but the continuous, vigorous, appropriate talk of his own narrative. It is in the Marx Brothers jokes, the "grenadine guards" and the "cross red nurses"; in the picture of couples sitting along the Seine frozen in "the strangleholds of l'amour"; the "crinkly cigarette smoke" in a Paris restaurant and a party of evening-dress Americans crossing the floor looking like "plush horses," while an American girl in the corner says "I think the French are wonderful"; the four American sailors in Liverpool:

> They went to another fried fish shop; couldn't seem to get a damn thing to eat in this country except fried fish, and then they all had some more drinks and were the four of them Americans feeling pretty good in this lousy limejuicer town. A runner got hold of them because it was closing time on account of the war and there wasn't a damn thing open and very few street-lights and funny little hats over on the street-lights on account of the zeppelins. The runner was a rat-faced punk and said he knowed a house where they could 'ave a bit of beer and nice girls and a quiet social time.

That is Mr. dos Passos running on level gear. He has no big scenes, no big characters, no crescendos or diminuendos. But he can change his atmosphere. Here, for contrast, is the childhood of a clergyman's daughter in Chicago:

> Little Eveline and Arget and Lade and Gogo lived on the top floor of a yellow brick house on the North Shore Drive. Arget and Lade were little Eveline's sisters. Gogo was her little brother littler than Eveline. On the floor below was Dr. Hutchins's study where Yourfather mustn't be disturbed, and Dearmother's room where she stayed all morning painting dressed in a lavender smock. On the ground floor was the drawingroom and the diningroom, where parishioners came and little children must be seen and not heard, and at dinnertime you could smell good things to eat and hear knives and forks and tinkly companyvoices and Yourfather's booming scary voice and when Yourfather's voice was going all the companyvoices were quiet. Yourfather was Dr. Hutchins but Our Father art in heaven. . . .

As a background to these individual narratives, which gurgle on with extraordinary ease and rapidity and a completely convincing earthiness, there are the newsreels, snippets from newspapers ludicrously isolated and juxtaposed, and the advertisement biographies of Wilson, Roosevelt, Edison, and other public men—the charade of public events. Wilson appears once at close-hand, addressing a select convoy of Italians near the ruins of the Temple of Romulus, assuring them of the immense love of humanity borne in American hearts—"a grey stony cold face grooved like columns, very long under the silk hat; the little smile around the mouth looked as if it had been painted on afterwards. The group moved on." The one ludicrous and pathetic appearance of the Napoleon of this *War and Peace* is typical and effective.

How far then do the two halves of the picture—the private lives and the public show, so violently contrasted—join? Well, they give the effect of simultaneity rather than unity; the mere contrast is effective and gives the book breadth. Mr. dos Passos has succeeded in splitting the one hundred per cent. American. He is a Communist (there is a strong undercurrent of the I.W.W. through these volumes) and this fact perhaps has decided the shape of his book. When Communism becomes his positive theme it may give him the larger momentum needed for a novel of this scope. *Nineteen Nineteen* leaves the impression that Mr. dos Passos is essentially master of a small art, like Mr. Hemingway, but possessed of immense zest for life and an incomparable native vigour in expressing it. *Nineteen Nineteen* has a mass of life of its own—vivid, restless, vernacular—and that after all is most important.

A YEAR ON PENGUIN ISLAND

The United States in World Affairs. By WALTER LIPPMANN and WILLIAM O. SCROGGS. Harper. 15s.

The first impression left by this story of international affairs during 1931—with a sketch of the relevant historical background—is that the authors have written a satiric masterpiece. It is with difficulty that the mind accepts the knowledge that this is not satire, but simply an unadorned account of the facts. Messrs. Lippmann and Scroggs draw no moral and make no denunciation; they tell their story with deadly lucidity, and the reader slowly realises that neither an Anatole France nor a Swift could have invented so shocking a tale, for their minds were too innocent of evil and too unaware of human foolishness.

One fact that quickly emerges is the aimlessness of the Hoover Administration, which seems never to have possessed anything so thoughtful as a policy. When a set of facts have forced themselves on everybody's attention, the Administration sometimes admits them; occasionally (when too late) it even acts upon them; but it never foresees them. During the months before the stock-market crash of October, 1929, the Administration was inanely assuring the country that all was well; after the crash, it kept repeating that all would be well in a month or two, since America's foreign trade was a stabilising influence. Late in 1930, the story was turned inside-out, and the American people were told that (though all would, of course, soon be well) America was being held back by her foreign trade, since the international situation was lamentable. Salvation, it was now declared, would be found in the policy of "self-containment." In 1931, however, self-containment began to look a little seedy, and the administration found it must co-operate in trying to save the financial system of Europe. This great discovery had been made by informed American opinion anywhere from two to ten years before the politicians noticed it. When at last Mr. Hoover acted, by suggesting the year's moratorium, he unnecessarily stirred French antagonism and thus drifted into a further delay. The result, in the words of the book, was that "although measures to relieve Germany were finally adopted after four weeks of spectacular international negotiation, the net effect was an aggravation and an extension of the financial crisis."

When the authors turn to the activities of European Governments, the story does not grow more reassuring. The Germans have been as tactless and as slow to learn as the Americans; the French—who at least know what they want—indulge an infantile desire for prestige, as when they responded, in July, 1931, to Mr. MacDonald's invitation for a conference in London by insisting that there would first have to be a conference in Paris. And behind all the European statesmanship of this disastrous year lies the cynical determination of the so-called rulers not to do anything, however wise or necessary, which might lose votes in the coming elections.

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The year 1931 did, however, see two hopeful changes in American foreign policy. In the first place, the United States adopted a neutral and disinterested attitude toward the many South American revolutions of 1930–31, showing that "it had returned to the time-tested recognition policy first announced by Thomas Jefferson in 1792; namely, that 'every nation has a right to govern itself internally under what form it pleases, and to change these forms at its will.' This policy had been abandoned by Secretary Bryan in dealing with Mexico in 1913. The American Government then acted on the assumption that recognition of a Government implies moral approval of its acts. The results of this new policy were not happy." And in the second place, the Hoover-Laval conversations in October, 1931, followed by American acceptance of the invitation to be represented on the Council of the League in the Manchurian affair, were a conscious and public recognition of the extent to which the United States is now committed to collaboration with Europe. These two hopeful items are small things in themselves, yet they relieve the gloom of an otherwise savage story.

HERBERT AGAR.

A DISCIPLE OF SHAW

Under the Fifth Rib. A BELLIGERENT AUTOBIOGRAPHY. By C. E. M. JOAD. Faber and Faber. 10s. 6d.

It is difficult not to jump at a chance of talking publicly about Mr. Joad. Some of us have so fixed an idea of him as completely representative of his age that it is hard not to take "Joad" as a text and preach a sermon on it. On the age of ideas, on the pulverising effect of Shaw and Wells when in the nineteen-tens they shone with maximum power on young men at the age of maximum impressionability, on the evils of imitating the characteristics rather than incorporating the spirit of the teacher, and so on. But in his autobiography Mr. Joad has rather taken the wind out of our sails. He disarms some of the critics by making their points for them. For though it is true that the greater part of the book follows the accustomed lines of its author's less "serious" publications—amusing denunciations of arterial roads, animadversions on the regrettably un-Joad-like qualities of women, attacks on the forces of what Joad and the eighteenth century call Unreason—yet there is a pinch of real autobiography: there are pages where instead of talking about his views he really does talk about himself.

The key lies in a chapter where he describes his evolution from over-educated schoolboy to passionate Fabian *via* a Balliol of glorious emancipations. He describes how Bernard Shaw came to be his prime mover: how Shaw formed his mind. When I first met him (he describes very well), "I felt like a third-rate curate meeting an incarnation of his deity . . . my tongue was so dry that I could not speak." The enthusiasm is right and good. But the result? Mr. Joad has advanced a certain distance by these admissions. Could he not have gone farther still? The real result can best be expressed mathematically. The effect of the inspiration was not, as it should have been, Joad + Shaw, but Joad ÷ Shaw: so that instead of being widened by inheriting ideas, the disciple was narrowed by inheriting an attitude.

It is because he represents an attitude that Mr. Joad annoys us. In his book the author cheerfully and even proudly acknowledges that he is annoying. "It is because," he says in effect, "I am an intellectual highbrow: it is because I am aggressive. . ." But is he, or is it only his attitude? Full of a mixture of rather charmingly modest admissions and tentative claims, fortified everywhere by anticipations of criticism, what bellicosity there is is surely the aggression of self-defence. And intellectual?

To start with, intellectuals do not go about giving delightful, unacademic appreciations of Bach on one page, and then on the next lump Stravinsky and Bax together as "Modern Music." Nor do they state with encyclopædic lack of criticism that James Joyce is the same as D. H. Lawrence (only rather less so) in the Degenerate Category *Sex Novel*. Moreover—and perhaps the chief value of the book lies in this very fact—he has the thoroughgoing quality of the unintellectual that his implicit admissions have greater validity than his explicit ones. "I shall not develop any more, I am fixed," he says—and then gives as an example of the way in which he is not after all as fixed as he makes out that he has *recently changed his political party*. Again, declaring that he heartily suspects all symbolism and allegory are a device to conceal muddled thinking, he produces as evidence for this judgment the *Immortal Hour* and Maeterlinck's *Blue Bird*. The point is, surely, that like all truly unintellectual people Mr. Joad's tastes are based on pre-judgments rather than judgments: he dislikes, even *before* he sees, hears or reads, whatever is unlike the hard, bright, purposeful world of Shaw and Wells. He even goes so far as to imply the impossibility of the existence of another world, another attitude. Never having had a new experience since the great emancipation, he concludes epigrammatically that new experiences are not worth recording. "If people have experienced the unutterable, then, I feel, they should not try to utter it." He is one of those for whom the word *mysterious* is synonymous with the derogatory "mystical." And so he will go on for ever, perhaps, explaining with brilliant clearness things which are quite easy to understand, proving for the rest of his life something which is only valuable at its first moment of realisation.

It is to be hoped that the merit of the book will appear from what has been said. It is never boring. The prose is simple and clear, of the periodic kind: the mixture of epigram and naivety is endearing. Even its defect is so lively and consistent as to stimulate readers by riling them. Perhaps the worst that can be said of Mr. Joad is that whereas some of our leaders, philosophical, scientific, and "metabiological," are trying to add a new dimension to the universe, he is trying to subtract one away. And there is no modern autobiographical viciousness—no humorous-deprecating egotism: no orgiastic reminiscence. Above all, there is the reverse side of the stunt aggressive attitude. There is the very un-highbrow spontaneity, sensitiveness, and integrity which has kept the author clear of modern endeavours to belittle everything which pre-war called important, just as it kept him clear, in 1914, of a causally connected tendency to make important what was only horrible. It is only when taken at its face value that the author's description of his book as middle-aged seems partly justified: it is only the attitude which is so curiously retrogressive—calculated even to corrupt the youth. But not, as Mr. Joad would once have liked to believe, in the flattering sense in which the town councillors of Athens laid that charge against Socrates.

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THE DUC DE MORNY

Imperial Brother. By MARISTAN CHAPMAN. Philip Allan. 12s. 6d.

Everybody who is interested in the history of the Second Empire must desire to know as much as possible about Auguste de Morny, Louis Napoleon's half-brother, who carried out the *coup d'état*, who was believed to be the power behind the throne, and who was suspected by some of aiming at the throne himself. This book purports to satisfy this curiosity. It is a very lively and pleasing performance, the work of a novelist who knows how to make a story. The worst is that, unless the reader has access to the authorities, he does not know when he is reading fact and when invention. Long conversations are reported, which must have been held behind closed doors. It would appear that one at least of the talkers was a Boswell, taking the minutest of notes, and afterwards printing them. We look at the foot of the page for the indispensable reference—there is not a word, not a sign. The ghost of Talleyrand appears to his grandson, and says some very remarkable things. We should like to know whence Miss Chapman obtained her information, for Morny was the most reticent of men, wrote as little as possible, and burnt most of what he wrote. Again we have to guess. What adds to our embarrassment is that the style is full of Gallicisms, and whole passages make us fancy that they are translated from original documents; but no opportunity is vouchsafed us of testing whether the fancy is illusory or not. In a word, unless the reader has all the enormous literature of the Second Empire at his fingers' ends, he is at Miss Chapman's mercy, and cannot be sure that he is not perusing memoirs as imaginative as Marbot's, or even a novel of the *Esmond* pattern, based on truth but taking French leave of the truth whenever the author so pleases.

Apart from the annoyance thus aroused, the book has great merits, and, in our opinion, gives a faithful portrait of its hero. Morny was, we believe, the most sagacious and honest of all Napoleon's advisers, and might, had his advice been taken, have prevented the disasters of the reign. He was unscrupulous, whereas Napoleon, like other famous men, had just scruple enough to hinder him from carrying a crime through. It was Morny who engineered the coup of December when his master hesitated. It was Morny who saved the Emperor from the ruin which Villafranca might well have brought. The frightful Mexican humiliation, which was the real harbinger of Sedan, would have been avoided if Morny had had his way. Either the villainy should never have been contemplated, or it should have been ruthlessly and energetically followed out. An alliance should have been made with Jefferson Davis, and the whole force of France should have been lent to the South to crush the North. Morny was no Lutheran, but he always obeyed Luther's maxim, "If you must sin, *pecca fortiter*." Napoleon was willing to wound, but afraid to strike; he chalked war on the wall and then ran away.

Morny foresaw the Prussian danger, and was not deceived by Bismarck. Had he lived, he would have bent his whole powers to prevent the follies which precipitated the *débâcle*. He might have failed—for he had to deal with a man who changed a mind every minute, and with a nation blinded by passion—but he would not have failed for want of effort. *Dis aliter visum:* he died in 1865, and the Empire, during the next five years, rushed unguided to catastrophe.

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Parson's Nine. By NOEL STREATFEILD. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

But Wisdom Lingers. By BEATRIX LEHMANN. Methuen. 7s. 6d.

It is a truism that there is all the difference in the world between the landscape seen by the stranger and the same landscape as it appears to the man who works in it. The stranger views it as a mere arrangement of curves and colours, beautiful or not according to his own aesthetic theory; the native sees it laden with associations, not only or mainly of the sentimental, but also of the practical kind. Thus it is that there are rival schools of thought on the question of the novelist's "local colour"; it can be urged with some degree of truth both that only the native and only the stranger can see the landscape as it really is. But in a novel the landscape should surely appear as it would appear to the persons of the story; Hardy never drew his Wessex scene as though it were *new* to his characters.

These reflections are prompted by the difference between the attitude to the land of Mr. Adrian Bell and that displayed by Miss Sackville-West's Godavarys. Mr. Bell is a Suffolk farmer. It is true that he is a great deal more than that; he is a poet and a philosopher, and a man acquainted with poets and philosophers as well; but he is a farmer all the time; he is, to adopt a phrase he uses of another man, "a purposeful part of the place he walks in," and it is in the recurring cycle of farm work that he finds his poetry and his philosophy. Thus he is always in firm touch with reality, and never strays away towards the sentimental. *The Cherry Tree*, announced as completing the trilogy begun in *Corduroy* and *Silver Ley*, does not require any knowledge of the previous books for its enjoyment, though it seems likely that readers of the one will turn eagerly to the others. It is simply a chronicle of a year at Silver Ley farm. Simply that; but written with such perception of eye and mind, such loving gentle courtesy towards man and beast, in such fine, terse English prose, that the result is singularly beautiful. The epic of the wheat, the nice conduct of a barn; the problem of cats, the significance of poultry; the perplexity of calves let loose for the first time in spring, the proper painting of a tumbril; the disadvantages of "feathers" on a horse's hooves in Suffolk clay; the story of simple Billy, who "though he would miss the meaning of a pail on occasion, had a keen eye for the corners where Nature achieved her small perfections"—it is rural England made articulate. Yet Mr. Bell is never lost to the

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In strong contrast to this profound attachment to the soil is the feeling of the Godavarys, who all seem to hate their wild remote Westmorland dale. Miss Sackville-West's volume contains two long-short stories, each marked by her characteristic distinction and subtlety. The first tale tells of the visit to his native dale of Gervase Godavary, to assist in the funeral ceremonies of his uncle. The Godavarys are a morose and shifty race, feeble yet uncontrolled, incapable of candid action, degenerate and doomed. The drama between the strangely assorted kinsfolk whom Gervase finds assembled at the Grange is at first "slow and dumb ; spiritual, not melodramatic." But presently the enigmatic Paola acts, to terrible purpose. For sheer descriptive power the scene of the funeral procession climbing the high wild pass, and later the slow inexorable flooding of the valley, would be hard to beat ; but the Godavarys are so alien from the common life of their dale that they seem alien from reality as well. The second tale, *Gottfried Künstler*, is a mediaeval fantasy, glittering as the ice on which Gottfried so superbly skates.

Herr Liepmann takes us to a different world, equally far from the sober peace of the English countryside and Miss Sackville-West's crystal magic. It is the world of post-war financial chaos ; Germany in the throes of the 1923 inflation. Too often Herr Liepmann's compatriots have obscured their country's distress for us in their fiction by turgid speeches and high-sounding generalisations ; *Peace Brôke Out* is mercifully lacking in these. It is a shortish book as German novels go ; it aims at showing us what a group of ordinary people suffered through inflation, and succeeds in that aim. Herr Schlag is a minor civil servant who has saved all his life that he may own a little house and garden in his old age ; discharged from the army in a state of mental muddle, he is ordered to avoid all excitement, and accordingly his wife and daughter keep the knowledge of inflation from him. One day the old man discovers, in a shop across the way, common objects priced at enormous sums in marks ; he runs out and joyously sells the shopman a mirror for, as he thinks, a whole year's income. This pathetic incident is typical of Herr Liepmann's method ; he everywhere reveals the general by portraying the individual and particular. All too soon the truth pierces Herr Schlag's perplexed old heart, and he hangs himself. Meanwhile his son and daughter, disillusioned, not bound by anything to anything, go to ruin in their different ways. Erich is a banker's broker ; there are some exciting scenes on the Bourse when he launches the shares of his fraudulent company, defends them from a "bear" attack, and is finally defeated. Not a cheerful book ; but an exciting one, because Herr Liepmann makes his characters real, and so interests us in their fate.

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The Scornful Man is curiously uneven. Its thesis is pantheistic ; "life is all one," says young Nicholas Purssord, who has just risked his own to save a kitten : "You can't detach one portion without injuring the other." Those parts of the book which express this philosophy, and describe the relations of Dr. Aicadre with his timid wife, rather disagreeable child and detestable mother-in-law, are interesting, subtle, mature ; but the visitors to the English Club which Colonel Stott founds in Deux Estaings are altogether too close to type to be real, and Miss Harris's enthusiasm for her very charming French scenery

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makes at times for the intrusion of irrelevant, not to say guide-bookish, descriptive detail.

Too much of *Parson's Nine* reads like E. M. Delafield's *Diary of a Provincial Lady* with the wit left out. The Reverend David Thurston's wife struggles to bring up her nine children decently on a parson's income, the while they prattle as never children did on sea or land. Then comes the war, the sensitive Baruch's tragedy and his twin's grief. The earnest sincerity of this novel makes one loth to condemn; but the 180 pages of childish reminiscence are really too many for an adult mind.

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The Universal Dictionary of the English Language. By H. C. WYLD. Routledge. 42s.

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Sarah Churchill. By FRANK CHANCELLOR. Philip Allan. 12s. 6d.

This biography is definitely post Lytton Strachey. Unfortunately it is not given to all to conduct us through the maze of distorting mirrors and to wave us out with something of truth. An epoch is not summed up in such a sentence as "Spades were called by their proper name with the addition of a sanguinary epithet." On the whole the background of the portrait is sketched in capably, if the picturesque is rather too dominant. It opens with the ball at S. James's, when a young Colonel of the Guards, who neither drank to excess, nor gambled, observes Sarah Jennings, rather exceptional, according to Mr. Chancellor, in having preserved her virginity. Mr. Chancellor has much evidence to prove his thesis that Sarah's lack of sympathy, an aggressive self-assertion, very little sense of humour brought about the fall of the Churchills from their power behind Anne. Yet the fact that Lady Churchill would not kowtow might as easily have sprung from the fact that she was undeniably more clever than most of those who have ruled princes, or simply that she was, as she maintained, a good friend. She who could see "no very great difference in partys" was scarcely deficient in humour. Bombarding the great Commander with letters, she may have used the Duke "like a footeman." She was anxious about his position and his rights. She saw through affairs with an intellect far ahead of her generation, and suffered the penalty.

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About Motoring

HOW CARS ARE SELLING

THE Ministry of Transport figures for car registrations last March suggest that a motor car is almost the last sacrifice which people make to economy. Considering the stagnation which rules in so many markets on the borderline between necessity and extravagance, cars continue to sell surprisingly well. In March 1931, 18,060 new motor cars were registered, and for March, 1932, the total dropped to 17,505. If we estimate the average cost of a car at £300, this means a reduction in the industry's turnover of no more than £150,000; and many of our trades would congratulate themselves if the slump had involved them in no greater reductions than this. If the totals are analysed several points of minor interest come to light. Any car exceeding 20 h.p. may be ranked as an extravagance, figuring in the category of luxuries. During March, 1931, 953 cars of between 20 and 60 h.p. were put on the road, as contrasted with 529 in the corresponding month of 1932. The output of a famous luxury car dropped by 50 per cent., though the factory was able to supplement its earnings by increased sales of other products. The saloon car tightened its hold on the market. The total output dropped by 555 vehicles, but 316 fewer touring bodies were built. This implies that the modern saloon no longer suffers from the traditional drawbacks of poor ventilation and inadequate visibility, which once prejudiced many owners against its purchase. The most amazing alteration in figures concerns the sale of cars rated at 8 h.p., of which 5,223 found buyers in March 1931, as compared with 3,982 during March 1932. But this apparent slump is pure illusion, for the 1932 sales of cars rated at 9 h.p. displayed an increase of nearly 2,000 over the March, 1931, figures. Students will remember that at the last Olympia Show a number of manufacturers catered for economy by producing very pleasant little nines and roomy coachwork; and these new models in many cases replaced previous chassis rated at 8 h.p. Economy is quite obviously the watchword of the amateur motorist, for there has been an enormous drop in the sales of the 15–16 h.p. chassis, totalling nearly 1,800 chassis for the single month under review, and this reduction in sales of what might be described as the ideal family car has been almost balanced by considerably larger production of the baby cars and the less capacious vehicles of 14 h.p. and under. The industry is plainly revising its policy under sheer financial compulsion. Since its customers cannot afford either the capital outlay or the maintenance charges on income which are desirable from the technical and practical standpoints, the manufacturer is doing his best to supply a satisfactory makeshift on a smaller scale and with an all-round economy in every form of motoring expenditure, covering tax, tyres, insurance, and fuel consumption. As there is no prospect of an early return to former standards of opulence and expenditure, these factors will assuredly exert a continued influence on the world of motoring. They imply that there is no immediate hope of our adopting American ideals in such respects. America for many years past has taken the line that the baby car is a mistake. The baby car is less safe and less comfortable than a medium-sized saloon of 16–20 h.p. It cannot be so comfortably sprung; it necessarily subjects its occupants to a certain degree of crowding; and it is far more readily capsized than its larger sisters. In a collision there is more risk of personal injury. It gains no safety points on the score of speed, for it is very nearly as fast as the larger cars, and if it is slower its owner is apt to drive it rather hard to compensate for any small inferiority in respect of absolute speed. So America very logically concentrated on cheapening the full-size family car. Cheap gasoline permitted its running costs to be kept down to trivial figures.

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America is now commencing to tax petrol, and may in the near future be compelled to seek revenue on a more exacting scale from car owners in general. America may thus be forced to seek our solution, and build baby cars in vast quantities. This is regrettable on all counts. A superficial judgment might opine that when the motor routes of all nations are becoming increasingly congested, a general reduction in the average size of cars ought to furnish a mild palliative. But the difference in length and width between a baby saloon, such as a 7 h.p. Austin, and a 20 h.p. Essex is trifling. It is much to be desired that financial factors should permit America, Britain, and all other motoring countries to cease building baby cars, and to find their cheap model in a mass-produced saloon of perhaps 15 h.p. with an overall length of say 14ft. Such a car would ride more comfortably than any baby; it would be less easily overturned; it would accommodate a family party without crowding; and its adoption might conceivably cheapen production by simplifying factory organisation and enabling the builders of cheap, popular cars to concentrate on a single model, at any rate so far as the chassis is concerned. There is, unfortunately, no hope whatever of such a rational and logical outcome. It is much more probable that all motoring nations will be driven to cut their motoring coat according to the depth of their purse, rather than according to practical considerations of comfort and technical factors. In this emergency we as Britons can at least rejoice that we have stolen a long lead of the rest of the world in the design and production of the baby car. Tariffs and exchanges will prevent our reaping any financial reward for our enterprise; and the offspring of our mechanical brains will be freely copied by other nations, even if Sir Henry Austin continues to draw handsome royalties from at least three great rival nations. But our own motorists will continue for a few years to enjoy better and cheaper motoring than their opposite numbers in America, France, Germany and Italy. Oddly enough, these transient benefits accrue to us by pure accident. Many years ago we rather foolishly adopted an arbitrary horse-power tax, which has often hampered our industry; but in the present emergency it is proving a real asset alike to our industry and to the consumer.

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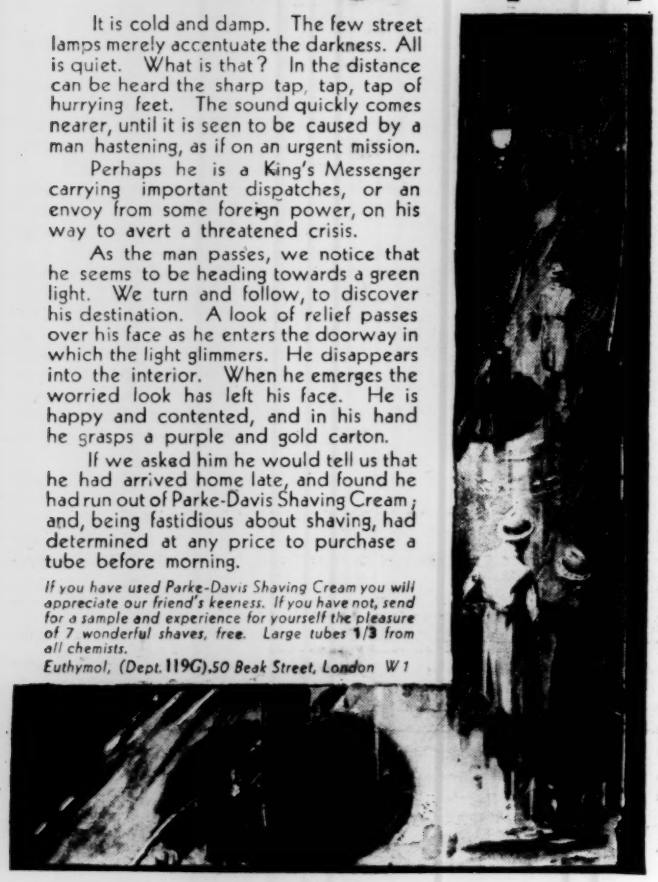

It is cold and damp. The few street lamps merely accentuate the darkness. All is quiet. What is that? In the distance can be heard the sharp tap, tap, tap of hurrying feet. The sound quickly comes nearer, until it is seen to be caused by a man hastening, as if on an urgent mission.

Perhaps he is a King's Messenger carrying important dispatches, or an envoy from some foreign power, on his way to avert a threatened crisis.

As the man passes, we notice that he seems to be heading towards a green light. We turn and follow, to discover his destination. A look of relief passes over his face as he enters the doorway in which the light glimmers. He disappears into the interior. When he emerges the worried look has left his face. He is happy and contented, and in his hand he grasps a purple and gold carton.

If we asked him he would tell us that he had arrived home late, and found he had run out of Parke-Davis Shaving Cream; and, being fastidious about shaving, had determined at any price to purchase a tube before morning.

If you have used Parke-Davis Shaving Cream you will appreciate our friend's keeness. If you have not, send for a sample and experience for yourself the pleasure of 7 wonderful shaves, free. Large tubes **1/3** *from all chemists.*

Euthymol, (Dept. **119G**)*.50 Beak Street, London W1*

Playtime

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

Problem 11

TAKING A CHANCE

Three criminals, Arsen, Burgler and Crooke, have decided to waylay and rob an old miser. While two of them keep watch, the third will carry out the assault. But which of the three shall it be?

After some discussion, the following plan is agreed upon. The key man is to be chosen by ballot, each of the three conspirators having three votes, which he can distribute as he pleases among his confederates and himself. The robbery is to be carried out by whoever gets most votes. All swear that there shall be no collusion in the voting.

It is further agreed—to encourage some measure of risk-taking—that the conspirator who gets most votes, and the one who comes next to him in the voting, shall between them share the bulk of the swag.

Arsen, like his colleagues, is anxious to secure second place. Before voting, he makes the following calculations. Burgler, who is timid, will not give any of his votes to himself. Crooke, however, is more likely to take a chance; and Arsen decides to vote on the assumption that Crooke will give himself one vote.

How should Arsen's votes be cast?

Problem 9

SIX AUTHORS IN SEARCH OF A CHARACTER

This proved to be the most popular contest for some time. Indeed, to my astonishment, some fifteen solutions appeared from readers who had never sent in anything before.

The identification of the authors is not difficult, though it takes time. Solutions which failed were those which ignored the fact that Mr. White never reads poetry.

The six authors are:

Mr. Black—Novelist.
Mr. Brown—Poet.
Mr. Gray—Playwright.
Mr. Green—Humorist.
Mr. Pink—Historian.
Mr. White—Essayist.

Points awarded to:

Dr. L. C. Adam, Asquitha, Agitat, R. E. Andrews, J. Bailey, D. Barber, Blind Mole J. Bourne, B. Brewster, A. L. Bulley, Dr. C. O. S. B. Brooke, V. Butler, Bronson, R. L. Briggs, J. B. Channon, H. L. Cox, A. Crokingburn, Cooper, R. M. Crosskey, Crooked Dean, L. C. Clarke, G. B. Courtier, T. W. Chaundy, Rev. C. Dinwoodie, C. M. Douglas, V. J. D., Major Fletcher, T. Faint, E. M. Fry, G. E. Goodman, E. C. I, Garner, W. P. Hudson, N. Hartley, S. R. Hayes, Initio, A. J., F. L. Jones, A. K., P. K., C. Lambert, Wyndham Lloyd, W. A. Lynch, A. C. Lynch, H. Moore, R. H. Millward, J. P. McEvoy, F. S. M., F. Morrell, G. P. Meredith, Mercutio, Macbeth, F. E. Maitland, J. L. Mackenzie, Mrs. H. L. Nathan, H. M. C. Orford, Mary Ogilvie, J. Procter, G. C. Potter, Rigel, M. Ross, L. R., G. G. Robb, Roscoe, Dr. F. M. Rose, S. T. S., F. P. Streeten, Silex, D. G. Sopwith, Sciss, G. Sharp, Thoriger, A. S. Tennant, J. Todd, R. Tregenza, Henry Vine, L. A. Wigglesworth, B. Willis, W. A. Whitehouse, Vic Waldron, C. H. Waddington, F. M. Worthen, Zylo, J. H. Mawson, W. B. M., J. L. Priston.

Problem 8.—L. G. Roussin.

Competitors for the Quarterly Prize are reminded that solutions (on **foolscap**, and with names and addresses clearly shown) must reach this office, addressed to *Caliban*, not later than midday on the **following** Thursday. Consideration, however, will be given to competitors residing abroad; every effort will be made to enable them to participate.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC

Uprights

Here's My Lord; here, Sir, are you.
Of each, to start with, give me two.

Lights

1. He wears his "lorals" on the Bench.
2. A "British King" begat the wench.
3. A tasty melange now display.
4. The novelist has lost his way.
5. One chapter's all that I can show.
6. One script on top and one below.

Last Week's Acrostic

V	I	C	T	O	R	I	A	
I			R				E	LAND
R		O		D	I		N	
G		R		A	C		E	
I		C		E		N	I	
L			O		N		D	ON

CALIBAN

London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 p.m., unless otherwise stated.

ALDWYCH. DIRTY WORK. Wed. & Fri.

GAIETY. HOLD MY HAND. Tues. & Fri.

GLOBE. MEN ABOUT THE HOUSE. Wed. & Fri.

ST. JAMES'S. THE VINEGAR TREE. This Sat.

ST. MARTIN'S. SOMEBODY KNOWS. Tu., Fri.

STRAND. PARTY. Wed. & Thurs.

WESTMINSTER. Wed., Thurs., Sat. THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

WYNDHAM'S. THE GREEN PACK. Wed., Sat.

THEATRES

ALDWYCH. Tem. Bar 6404.
Nightly, 8.30. Mats., Wed., Fri., 2.30.
RALPH LYNN in
DIRTY WORK.

COLISEUM. Charing Cross. Tem. Bar 3161.
TWICE DAILY at 2.30 & 8.15.
Sir Oswald Stoll presents
ERIK CHARELL'S
CASANOVA.

GAIETY. Evgs., 8.15. Mats., T. & F., 2.30. Tem. 6991.
HOLD MY HAND,
with
STANLEY LUPINO, JESSIE MATTHEWS.

GLOBE. Gerrard 8724.
EVGS., at 8.30. MATS., Wed. and Fri. at 2.30.
MEN ABOUT THE HOUSE.
A Comedy in 3 Acts by Robert York.

HIPPODROME. London. Ger. 3272.
June 11th, 8.15. Subs. at 8.30. Wed., Th., & Sats., 2.30.
Julian Wylie's New Musical Comedy,
OUT OF THE BOTTLE.
Clifford Mollison, Arthur Riscoe, Polly Walker, Frances Day, Debroy Somers and His Band.

ST. MARTIN'S. (Tem. 1443.)
Nightly at 8.30. Mats., Tues. & Fri., 2.30.
SOMEBODY KNOWS.
By JOHN VAN DRUTEN.

ST. JAMES'S. Whitehall 3903.
Nightly 8.30. First Mat., This Sat., 2.30.
MARIE TEMPEST in
THE VINEGAR TREE.

STRAND. Temple Bar 4143. Evgs., at 8.40.
PARTY. By IVOR NOVELLO.
LILIAN BRAITHWAITE. BENITA HUME.
Mats. Wed. and Thur. 2.30.

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Mats., Wed., Thurs., and Sat., 2.30.
For 3 Weeks Only. GILLIAN SCAIFE in
THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

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GERALD DU MAURIER in
THE GREEN PACK. By EDGAR WALLACE.

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Exclusive Run LEONTINE SAGAN'S Psychological Study of Adolescence,
MADCHEN IN UNIFORM. 7th Week.
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MISCELLANEOUS

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

BY TOREADOR.

AMERICAN RELIEF WORKS—CHILEAN REVOLT—METAL FAILURE—RAILWAYS AND C.P.R.

RELIEF works in America are to be confined to the Stock Exchange—at any rate for the present. A company has been formed under the name of The American Securities Investing Corporation with an initial capital of $100,000,000 with the object of supporting the bond market. The Corporation will obtain further funds by the sale of debenture bonds to banking institutions. Messrs. J. P. Morgan and Company and Kuhn, Loeb and Company, will act as managers and the directors will include the presidents of leading New York banks and two partners of the house of Morgan. The managers have allowed it to be known that they intend to buy for the purpose of making a profit. This, however, may merely be politics. The bankers may think that it is now safe to risk their own money in the bond market or they may think that it is not, but in any case they must let the public think that they think so. It was also stated that actual operations would be deferred if the Budget were not properly balanced, so that the public should realise that bankers in America have as much right to a ramp as bankers in Great Britain. We must not laugh at this peculiarly American attempt at relieving business depression. The Stock Exchange is the pulse of America, and if the pulse beats strongly and regularly, the public is less nervous. We know, of course, that the support of the bond market will be of no avail if the economic situation in America continues to deteriorate. The further decline in power output and in railroad car loadings does not suggest that any recovery is in sight. Nor is there likely to be recovery until inflation of credit is translated into inflation of consuming power by the undertaking of public works on a colossal scale, or by the encashment of War Veterans' certificates, or by an all round rise in wages and salaries.

* * *

The news of the Socialist *coup d'état* in Chile was the first disturbing news which had been received by the City since the default stage of the great slump had been reached. The City had begun to realise that the capitalist system would stand any amount of knocks from capitalists. After all, the system is designed to meet the shocks of both slumps and swindles. If a swindler ruins a good company there is the machinery at hand for orderly liquidation. If a great company falls on evil times and fails to earn an adequate return on its capital, it can write down its capital and reconstruct in the orthodox manner. But the shock which the capitalist system will not stand is interference with the sacred rights of private ownership of capital. Now Chile has long since defaulted, its nitrate industry is ruined (for the time), and the so-called national nitrate Company, "Cosach," has been still-born, with its 7 per cent. prior secured sterling bonds quoted "down and out" at 25. But still no one is seriously disturbed. A few investors are even attracted by the opportunity of buying Chilean Government Bonds at "option money" prices. But comes a Socialist Junta and the situation is radically changed. If Chile is seriously intending to nationalise the banks, confiscate "Cosach" and do all the unpleasant things which the Soviet Government did in the Russian revolution, the investor will really take fright. As a matter of fact, I doubt whether the revolution in Chile will go the whole hog. The confiscation of "Cosach" has already been deferred until the experts have been consulted and have reported on the nitrate position. If the Guggenheims and their bankers, who sold up Chile in the flotation of "Cosach," in order to get rid of their own liabilities, really get alarmed and come to the aid of the Government with hard cash, I expect the revolution will quieten down into a reform of capitalist system and Cosach. Chile unfortunately cannot live without external help.

* * *

When you have been established in business over a hundred years it must be an unpleasant shock to be declared a defaulter—at any rate it would be if you were Chinese. This was the unhappy experience of Lewis Lazarus & Sons this week, the oldest firm on the London Metal Exchange. The failure was of no mean size, involving about 5,500 tons of tin, 2,000 tons of copper, and some small quantities of lead and zinc. The tin alone had a value of some £632,000. It is not thought that the firm itself had any large "open" position; it is believed that it was holding the bulk of the tin on Continental account. The strange idea that England would inflate appears to have induced a French syndicate to go "long" of that particular metal. It has been quietly arranged that the big firms should take over at £115 per ton the amounts of tin they were due to deliver to Lazarus. The balance has been privately placed. This means, in effect, that a large amount of tin may be thrown on the market at any moment. Seeing that 5,500 tons represents nearly one-tenth of the world's visible supply (including carry-over in the Straits Settlements) the outlook for tin is not promising. The opportunity has been taken by the advocates of *laissez-faire* to denounce the tin restriction scheme as the root of all this evil. I have no doubt that the restriction scheme has encouraged speculation, but it has probably saved the tin market from complete demoralisation. Tin production is the only industry which has carried through an international restriction scheme with legislative sanctions. The Governments of British Malaya, the Dutch East Indies, Nigeria, Bolivia and Siam have enforced, through the International Tin Committee, four drastic cuts, bringing down the output of the restricting areas from the 1929 level of 191,876 tons per annum to 90,000 tons per annum. The Tin Producers' Association have now recommended a two months' holiday in addition. No doubt the next step will be to order the entire shutting down of the tin-producing industry. Stoppage is, of course, the logical outcome of all efficiently managed restriction schemes which are designed to keep pace with a falling consumption. We are coming to appreciate that the cure of deflation, pressed to its logical conclusion, is the cure that kills.

* * *

It is pleasant for railway managers to reflect that railways are the innocent victims of forces they cannot control, but this is cold comfort for the railway bond holders. The four British groups have recently informed the Railway Rates Tribunal that their total net revenues were short of the standard revenues allowed under the Act by £5 millions in 1929, £12½ millions in 1930 and £17½ millions in 1931—the actual net revenue figures being £45 millions, £37¾ millions and £33¼ millions respectively. The Railway Rates Tribunal has to consider three points—whether the deficit is due to lack of efficiency or economy in the management of the companies, whether the deficit is likely to continue, and whether rates should be raised to enable the companies to earn their standard revenues. On the first point the Chairman of the Railway Rates Tribunal has asked for detailed evidence. It is obvious that any general increase in rates would lead to no material improvement in the companies' financial position, for traffic would be diverted to a still greater extent to the roads. On the other hand, Sir Ralph Wedgwood, the chief General Manager of the London & North Eastern Railway, stated that a reduction in the ordinary passenger fare from 1½d. to 1d. per mile would involve the railways in a heavy loss. Nothing is likely to be done except to make further cuts. Actually the British railways have made a better showing than the railways in France or America. Even the Canadian Pacific, whose preference stock (now 40) in normal times could rarely be bought to yield as much as 5 per cent., is now faced with a reduction of 33 per cent. in gross earnings as compared with three years ago. Thanks to a reduction in working expenses of 34 per cent., the net earnings of the Canadian Pacific have not fallen more precipitately than gross earnings, but I do not regard even their preference dividends as safe. Last year the common shares earned only 2¾ per cent. to cover dividends of 5 per cent. In 1929 the common shares (now $25 par value) touched the equivalent of 68. They have been down to 9⅝ and are now quoted at 11⅝. About $335 millions of common stock are issued, of which 45 per cent. is held in Great Britain and the Empire outside Canada. British holders (outside Canada) of Canadian Pacific common shares have therefore suffered a depreciation of £59 millions as compared with the highest level of 1929. That the report which Lord Ashfield has just made on the position of Canadian Pacific and the Canadian National Railways should be made public is not merely a question of Canadian politics.

* * *

In writing the other week of the deterioration in the intrinsic security of British Government stocks, I wrongly stated that income tax was 6d. in the £ in 1913/14. If I had then been paying income tax (as an injured correspondent pointed out) I would have known that it was then 1/2—and still as unpopular.

COMPANY MEETING

BOOTS PURE DRUG CO., LTD.

LORD TRENT'S SURVEY

945 SHOPS—129,000,000 CUSTOMERS

The 44th Annual General Ordinary Meeting of Boots Pure Drug Company, Limited, was held at Station Street, Nottingham, on June 8th, 1932, the Right Honourable Lord Trent, Chairman of Directors, presiding over a large attendance of shareholders.

The Chairman said: Turning to the Balance Sheet, you will see that Freehold Properties are up by £159,727. Practically all of this is accounted for by outlay on our new Manufacturing Laboratories at Beeston. Plant and fittings have increased by £133,810 for the same reason.

The building is now rapidly approaching completion, and already one department is housed there, but it will be several months before the various manufacturing sections are in full production in their new home.

Stock in Trade shows a decline of £50,482 on last year's figures.

The amounts owing by Subsidiary Companies have increased by £90,230.

On the other side of the Balance Sheet, Sundry Creditors, provision for Income Tax and contingencies, show an increase of £52,624.

We have again transferred £30,000 to the General Staff Pension Fund, which, with £13,309 on account of Interest, now amounts to a total of £309,498.

I should like to say a few words in explanation of the very large increase in the Depreciation Fund. It has always been our custom to depreciate plant at a very much larger figure than is allowed by the Income Tax Authorities. We are thus in the very desirable position of being able to replace even comparatively new equipment if it has been superseded by some improved type. Owing, however, to the large amount of new plant which is being installed at Beeston, our depreciation charges during the next few years will be much higher than usual.

We have, therefore, adopted the course of making a special provision of over £36,000 before arriving at the Trading Profit, which will be applied during the next few years in equalising the depreciation charges. This sum, together with the normal charge of £55,790 appearing in the Profit and Loss Account, makes a total increase in the Depreciation Fund of £92,070.

Referring to the Works Development Fund, you may recall, when that Fund was started in 1927, that I said in the Chairman's Speech, "We think it wise to set aside the sum of £100,000 as a Fund out of which we can pay for the inevitable expense of transferring departments to a new site."

We have taken £60,000 during the past year to reduce the book value of certain properties which we shall no longer require when the Beeston Works are fully developed. It is recommended that a further £100,000 should be set aside for this Fund, making a balance of £140,000 available for any additional expense incurred in the removal. Your Directors feel that this sum should amply cover any further charge on this Fund, as the remaining buildings being vacated by the Manufacturing Departments are urgently required for other purposes.

PROFIT AND LOSS

Turning to the Profit and Loss Account, you will notice that the net balance, after charging Repairs and Renewals and the other items to which I have just referred, amounts to £731,891, or an increase of £9,627 over last year.

If you add the £36,000 which I mentioned a few moments ago to the sum of £866,950 Trading Profit, you will see that the Company had a record year, which, in view of the extraordinarily difficult business conditions, must be considered very satisfactory.

After payment of all Preference and Preferred Ordinary Dividends, and of four quarterly dividends of 6 per cent., less tax, on the Ordinary Shares, we have a balance from the year's profits of £275,141, which, together with the balance from last year, amounts to £495,484. Your Directors recommend the payment of a bonus of 1s. per share, free of Income Tax, on the Ordinary Shares, absorbing £75,000, which is the same as last year. They also recommend that £100,000 shall be added to the Reserve Fund, which will then stand at £1,400,000, and a transfer made of £100,000 to the Works Development Fund, leaving £220,484 to be carried forward to next year.

The increasing confidence of the public in the Firm is shown in many ways. For instance, the dispensing in the Branches, both of private and National Health Insurance Prescriptions, showed a greater increase than in any other year of our history. Although there was no serious epidemic last winter, and very little cold weather, the number of prescriptions dispensed was up by nearly half a million.

INCREASE OF CUSTOMERS

We had also an increase of nearly 5,000,000 of sales transactions, or, as it is more generally referred to, of customers, making a record total of 129 millions for the year. This has naturally meant a great increase in the amount of tonnage sent out.

Although in the Retail business the sales during the year of our drugs, medicinal and toilet preparations, and surgical requisites reached record figures, even better results were obtained from the Export side, where the amount of our own Medicinal Products and Fine Chemicals exported showed a very large increase indeed. This, I am sure, will be particularly gratifying to our Shareholders, as it shows that, whilst we recognise that it is our duty as Retailers to provide the public with the best value we can get and the newest products of medicinal skill from any part of the world, we are also contributing in the vital matter of exports.

34 NEW SHOPS

I think it would be of interest to our shareholders and customers to know that, not only are our special medical products carefully controlled by our chemists and analysts as regards their activity and absolute purity, but when all our chemical and biological tests have been completed, we still do not issue these products to the medical profession until they have first been approved by physicians and chemists of high standing in certain of our leading hospitals and universities. We are extremely fortunate in having connected with us, as consultants, some of the leading biochemists, physiologists, and physicians, who assist us in the scientific and clinical investigations which are so important in connection with new or improved products.

There is evidence that farmers and Live Stock owners are appreciating the service we give them on the Veterinary side of our business. That service is to supply drugs and Veterinary medicines that are of a definite strength and subject to the same analytical tests for purity as those supplied for human consumption. We have already established valuable goodwill in some veterinary specialities.

During the year 10 shops were rebuilt almost entirely, and the total was brought up to 945 shops by the opening of 34 new ones, including one in Wigmore Street, London, in a convenient position for the Specialists and Nursing Homes in that district; this branch is fully equipped to deal with their particular requirements. In one City, as our position is so close to the Cathedral, we went to considerable expense to maintain the character of an old building instead of pulling it down and rebuilding, which would have been more convenient for strictly business purposes. As a mark of appreciation, the Mayor requested that he should be allowed to open the shop personally. Although this is perhaps an extreme case, we do try to put up premises which will be in harmony with the surroundings, and not just 900 shops all looking alike. We know that this policy has won many friends for the Company.

We have a splendid staff who always do their utmost for the success of the Company, and we are extremely glad to be able to say that the above results have been obtained without our having had to put in any general wage reductions.

I have now much pleasure in moving that the accounts be accepted and that the appropriations out of the profits as printed in the Directors' Report be and are hereby approved.

Mr. J. E. Greenwood seconded the adoption of the report, which was carried unanimously.

On the proposition of Mr. J. W. Hind, seconded by Col. Braithwaite, the retiring Directors were re-elected as follows: Messrs. J. E. Greenwood, H. R. Gillespie, L. K. Liggett, Dr. P. C. Brett, and Mr. B. A. Bull.

Messrs. Sharp, Parsons & Co., Chartered Accountants, Birmingham and London, were reappointed auditors, on the motion of Mr. A. N. Bromley, seconded by Mr. T. S. Ratcliffe.

A cordial vote of thanks to the Chairman and Directors was heartily approved on the proposition of Sir Harry Peat, seconded by Mr. G. C. Bond.

ADVERTISING POLICY JUSTIFIED

The Chairman: Before I turn specifically to the very kind remarks Sir Harry Peat has made, may I just refer to Mr. Bromley's speech for a moment, because he made reference in that to the advertisements which we have had produced for us during the past year or so? I do not want to say this—perhaps some people are doubtful about the wisdom of advertising when times are bad, but we felt, when things were not very good last year, that that was just the time to spend more money on advertising, and rather than reduce our advertising allocation we increased it, and I think the results have justified us in that policy.

I would like to say we do appreciate Sir Harry Peat's remarks about team work on this firm, because these results could not be produced by one man or by the Board of Directors. I am satisfied in my mind that one of the things which has helped us to produce these results is that we have done our very utmost to take all possible steps rather than make any reduction in wages.

I am not going to make any prophecies for the next year. In times like these, I do not think one should, but our staff know that wages will be the last thing to be touched and not the first, and we are quite satisfied that has a great deal to do with the magnificent spirit they show in working for this organisation. I can only say, ladies and gentlemen, nobody hopes more than I do myself that, when the time comes for our meeting next year, I shall be able to place before you results at least as satisfactory as we have to-day.